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MOTI CHANDRA

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## NIDHISRIṄGA (CORNUCOPIA) : A STUDY IN SYMBOLISM

Moti Chandra

The study of Indian art, iconography and even decorative motifs is full of complexities and pitfalls as more than often their sources are deeply rooted in ancient traditions. What may appear on the surface as obvious or even fantastic may be impregnated with deep symbolic significance which is difficult to understand without a searching inquiry into the spiritual, religious and social environments of the people who gave concrete meaning to the symbols which they understood perfectly, but whose significance became blurred in the course of their transmission through the ages. The difficulty for the proper interpretation of symbols in this country is also due to the fact that the religion which gave purposeful meaning to the symbols, as remarked by A. K. Coomaraswamy, "passed through its greatest crises and underwent the most profound changes. Vedic ritual, indeed, has survived in part upto the present day; but the religious outlook of mediaeval and modern India is so profoundly different from that of Vedic period, as known to us from the extant literature, that we cannot apply to both a common designation; mediaeval and modern Hinduism is one thing, Vedic Brahmanism another. The change is two-fold, at once inward and spiritual, and outward and formal."<sup>1</sup> The spiritual revolution brought about by the Upanishadic teachings and Buddhist psychology shifted the emphasis from the outer world to self introspection and final release, but all these higher thoughts were confined to seekers of truth whose number must have been limited. But as remarked by Coomaraswamy again the ultimate goal of Indian civilization is not *Moksha* or *Nirvāṇa*, but *Dharma* or right conduct which held the people together. Quest for pure knowledge may elevate a person to higher planes, but an active person believing fully in the destiny of man seeks a personal god, devotion to whom brings the fulfilment of desires. This conflict between the spiritual and the devotional approaches has not only coloured the thought processes of the contestants, but so far as ancient Indian art is concerned it shows the survival of popular religions, beliefs, symbols and iconography, which inspite of a thin veneer of spirituality belong to a world which is not concerned with abstract spirituality and metaphysical speculations but to a world in which Yakshas, Nāgas, Śiva, tree spirits and animals play an important part. As remarked by Coomaraswamy "It is natural and reasonable to assume that these ideas and deities derive, not from the Vedic Aryan tradition, but, as De la Vallée-Poussin expresses it, from 'un certain fond commun, très riche, et que nous ne connaissons pas parfaitement.'"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Felgar*, Part I, Washington, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, p. 2.



Unfortunately, the sources of the rich popular culture which in course of time deeply affected Hindu religion, thought and art are seldom studied and commented upon. Formerly, it was customary with the scholars to discuss some aspects of Hindu religion such as the fertility and Mother Goddess cults as the faith of the Dasyus who inhabited northern India before the advent of the Aryans on the scene. But one has to be careful now in using the term Dasyu in a derogatory sense. The discovery of the Harappan culture has opened a new world which should lay to rest the so-called theory about the primitiveness of the Dasyus who might or might not have been the founders of the Harappan culture. But one thing is certain that culturally the Harappan people were far in advance of the much lauded Vedic Aryans. It is significant that the religion of the Harappans shows certain phases of Hindu beliefs. The worship of the so-called Śiva in his Paśupati form, the Mother Goddess, tree spirits, demons and other supernatural beings, reminds us of its intimate contact with popular Hinduism through the ages. Harappan script has not yet been deciphered and therefore one would never be sure about the proper identification of the gods and spirits represented on the seals. It is also difficult to be positive about the rituals and philosophy of the Harappan people, though it is possible that, "there may well have existed esoteric and philosophical phases of the same beliefs."<sup>2</sup> It is also possible that Hindu philosophical systems borrowed certain elements from the Āgamic than Vedic sources. There is a deep rooted belief that the theistic scriptures or Āgamas as they are known were coeval in antiquity with the Vedas. Though it is difficult to prove this in the absence of the ancient Āgamas, yet there are sufficient survivals in the Vedic sources, specially in the *Atharvaveda*, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Gṛhyasūtras* which stand in contradiction to the Vedic tradition which must have their roots in the hoary past.

How the contradicting principles of the Vedic and Āgamic traditions coalesced and were absorbed in mediaeval Hinduism requires not only a careful study of the Vedas and the epics but also ancient Indian art which not only betrays elements contrary to the religion that it professes to serve, but also represents symbols and decorative motifs which definitely point their origins to popular sources. In the study of symbols it is easy to formulate one's views based on ill digested facts and superficial resemblances. Our difficulty in the study of Indian symbols is further enhanced by the fact that both Buddhism and Hinduism have tried to gloss over the actualities and have given their own interpretations but whose sources could be traced to the hoary antiquity. The unwinding of the complicated skeins of symbols to reach their original meaning is, however, not so easy. While dealing with the symbols one has not only to bear in mind literary references sometimes contradictory in nature, but also avoid sectarian interpretations and hasty conclusions based on the identity of certain symbols in cultures differing widely in their beliefs, because symbols are migratory, and may assume different significance in different places.

<sup>2</sup> Coomaraswamy, *loc. cit.*, p. 2.



In the following pages an attempt has been made to bring together the literary, monumental and archaeological evidences sufficient to present a fairly clear picture of the 'horn' or cornucopia motif designated very aptly by the *Vishṇudharmottara Parāṇa* as *nidhiśrīṅga* i.e., the treasure-horn or cornucopia.

Cornucopia is a well-known motif in Roman art. Regarding its origin it is said that Herakles in his later adventures met in the world of the shades Meleager, son of Oeneus, king of Aetolia who urged him to seek the hand of his sister Deianeira. Herakles however found other suitors contending for her hand, among them being the river god Achelous. A duel between them followed in the course of which the river god assumed the form of a bull, only to have one of his horns torn off. Herakles proved the victor and the Naiades, or the river nymphs retrieved the severed horn, filled it with fruits and grain and gave it to the Goddess of Plenty called Fortuna. This was the cornucopia, or the Horn of Abundance.<sup>4</sup>

The presence of the cornucopia on Gupta coins led John Allan to assert that as the significance of the cornucopia was unintelligible to the Hindus the motif must have been borrowed from Roman art.<sup>5</sup> Herald Ingholt following suit while describing certain Gandhāra figures holding the cornucopia remarks "an attribute at first sight extremely strange as horn is unclean to Hindus."<sup>6</sup> Such statements only show the writers were unaware of Vedic practices, as Vedic literature stresses the importance of the antelope's horn in the Yajñas and its use as a ritualistic implement in the consecration ceremony of a king. The epics as well stress the importance of the horn of a bull, an elephant tusk, and the gods like Śiva and Viṣṇu are said to be possessed of horns.

In the *Rigveda* and the later *Samhitās*, *śrīṅga* denotes the horn of any sort of animal. Hence the 'barb' of an arrow is also called its horn in the *Atharvaveda*.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, *viśāṅga* in the *Atharvaveda* and later denotes an animal horn. But besides the primary meaning of *śrīṅga* and *viśāṅga* the words have certain symbolical connotations which are discussed below.

In the *Rigveda*, I, 163.9, the golden horn (*hiranyaśrīṅgaḥ*) of Indra is mentioned. There is, however, no indication whether some kind of horned helmet is indicated or whether horn was a part of Indra's physiognomy. The latter explanation could not be ruled out as it will be seen later on that Śiva, Viṣṇu and Kubera, have appellations which signify their association with horn; at times iconographically emphasis is laid on this characteristic. In the same hymn (*R.V. I, 163. 11*) it is said about the sacrificial charger:

तव शृङ्गाणि विठिता पुरुनारण्येषु जम्बूराणां चरन्ति ।

<sup>4</sup> H. A. Guerber, *The Myths of Greece and Rome*, London, 1948, p. 132.

<sup>5</sup> J. Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties*, London, 1914, p. lxxii.

<sup>6</sup> Herald Ingholt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, New York, 1957, p. 148.

<sup>7</sup> A. A. Macdonell and A. E. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1958, *Śrīṅga*, p. 393.



"Thy horns are spread about in all directions;  
they move with restless beat in wilderness."

Translated by R. T. H. Griffith.

The exact significance of the charger's horns is not apparent, but if the horse here signifies a solar symbol then the rays may stand for horns. Anyway the idea of fertility is closely associated with the Horse Sacrifice which is said to bring rain, cause the fruit-bearing plants to ripen and ensure the security of possession. (*S.B.* XIII, 1, 9, 10). *Vishāṇin* or 'horned' occurs once in the *Rigveda*, VII, 18. 7 in the list of the enemies of the Tritus. The word literally means 'having horns'. Two explanations may be offered for this term: (a) the word indicates some tribe whose members wore helmets decorated with horns. They like their allies Alinas, Bhalānas and Pakthas were perhaps one of the tribes inhabiting the north-west. These 'horned men' (*sriṅgino narāḥ*) are also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, II, 47. 26. Here no fabulous beings are intended. Perhaps they represent one of the Śaka tribes in an absolute state of barbarism wearing skins with the fur turned upwards and horned headdresses—a costume used by the Tibetan devil-dancers even to this day. It is significant to note that in north-west India (now in Pakistan), Baluchistan and Central Asia, the people dedicated the horns of hill goats and ibexes to their god, and that practice, as will be seen later on still survives in Muslim *Ziarats* and *Mazars* in those regions. In this case *Vishāṇin* may stand for those who were dedicated to the horn cult.

The *Atharvaveda* also uses the word *sriṅga* in the general sense of horn of any animal. However, in these *Samhitās* the medical and magical purposes of the horn are clearly recognized. The *Atharvaveda*, VIII, 6. 14 in this connection observes:

ये पूर्वे वध्वो ३ यन्तिहस्ते वृङ्गाणि विभ्रतः ।  
आपाकेष्ठाः प्रहासिन स्तम्बे ये कुर्वन्ते ज्योतिस्तानितो नाशयति ॥

"Those bearing horns upon their hands, who first of all approach brides;

Standing in ovens, laughing loud, those who in bushes flash full light, all these we banish hence away."—Griffith.

It is apparent from the *mantra* that the women carrying horns in their hands approached the newly married wife firstly perhaps to ensure her fertility, symbolized by horns though this fact is not stressed, and secondly to drive away the devils inhabiting the domestic hearth and fields.

The medicinal value of the antelope horn is emphasized in another hymn of the *Atharvaveda*, III, 7. 1-3:

हरिणस्य रघुप्यदोऽविष्णीर्षणि भेषजम् ।  
स क्षीयिष्य विषाणया विष्णुर्नोतमनोनशत् ॥ १ ॥

अनु त्वा हरिणो वृषा पद्भिश्चतुर्भिरकमोत् ।  
 विषाणे विध्य गुणितं यदस्य क्षेत्रियं हृदि ॥ २ ॥  
 अदो यदवरोचते चतुष्पलमिव छदि : ।  
 तना ते सर्वं क्षेत्रियमङ्गेभ्यो नाशयामसि ॥ ३ ॥

"1. Upon the head of the nimble antelope a remedy grows. He has driven the Kshetriya (inherited disease) in all directions by means of the horn.

2. The antelope has gone after thee with his firm feet. O horn, loosen the Kshetriya that is knitted into his heart.

3. (The horn) that glistens yonder like a roof with four wings (sides) with that drive out every Kshetriya from thy limbs."

—Bloomfield's translation.

The *Kaushitaki* 27, 29-31 explains in detail the rites while reciting the *A.V.*, III, 7. The practitioner fastened on the patient an amulet made from the antelope's horn and gave him water to drink. The relation of the antelope with the Kshetriya is extremely obscure.<sup>8</sup>

Another interesting reference to the horn as a medicine appears in *Atharvaveda*, VI, 44-3:

रुद्रस्य मूत्रमस्यमृतस्य नामिः ।  
 विषाणका नाम वा असि पितृणां मूलादुत्थितावाती कृतनाशनी ॥

"Thou art the urine of Rudra, the navel of *amṛita* (ambrosia). Thy name, foresooth, is *Vishāṇakā*, thou art arisen from the foundation of the Fathers, a remover of diseases produced by the winds (of the body)."

The hymn does not indicate the nature of the disease though Keśava describes it as an *apavādabhaishajyam* (*Kaushika Sū.*, 31. 6) and his comment leaves no doubt that it regards it as a practice against calumniators. Whatever might have been the nature of the disease there is some doubt about the nature of the medicine. Bloomfield at first interpreted *vishāṇakā* as some kind of medicinal plant but later on changed his view. According to him: "Obviously *Kaushika* interprets *vishāṇakā* in st. 3 as 'horn', and a horn that has curative power we have in III, 7. 2. 3 (*cf.* the *sūtra* in the introduction). But *vishāṇakā* may after all be only the diminutive of *vishāṇa* horn."<sup>9</sup>

However, some other indications in the hymn support a deep rooted belief in the efficacy of the horn. It is called 'the navel of ambrosia' (*amṛitasya-nābhīḥ*) and 'the urine of Rudra'. As 'the navel of ambrosia' its curative power is beyond any question. But as the 'urine of Rudra' the *vishāṇakā* is obviously connected with Rudra as a healer, as urine in primitive medicine is supposed to be

<sup>8</sup> M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, Reprint, Delhi, 1964, pp. 336-337.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 481-482.



very potent. The comparison of the horn with urine is perhaps based on its urinous smell. It is, however, notable that here, for the first time, Rudra is connected with horn. Horn is a symbol of fertility and abundance and one of the features in the complex personality of Rudra makes him a god of fertility and vegetation (*R. V.*, I, 143.6; II, 33.7). In this connection Rudra's conception as *viśvabha* or the bull (*R. V.*, II, 33.6.8) in the secondary sense also means as one who caused rain and one with strong generative power. His healing role is further emphasized in the later *Samhitās*.

In the later *Samhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* the sacrificial and ritualistic functions of the black antelope-horn is emphasized. The symbolism of the antelope horn may be gauged from the following legend :

It is said in *Taittiriya Samhitā*, VI, 1.3. 1-2 that the *Rik* and *Sāman* unwilling to remain with the gods took the form of a black antelope for the sacrificial purpose. The gods fearing that the person to whom they had resorted was bound to become lord of all this world called on them and they depositing their might in the day and the night came up to them. The white is said to be the colour of the *Rik* and black that of the *Sāman* and therefore the black and white fur of the black antelope skin represented the day and night and whatever is imbued in the two. The black antelope skin represents holy power and therefore the Adhvaryu consecrates the sacrificers with holy power.

It is further said that Sacrifice coupled with Dakṣiṇā and Indra perceived this and reflected : "He who will be born of this union will be the Lord of the world. Yajña entered Dakṣiṇā and Indra was born. Seeing that some rival will be born out of the union, Indra tore the womb and Dakṣiṇā was barren afterwards. Stroking her womb he split it. He wrapped (the *yoni*) in his hand and deposited it among wild beasts, and it became the horn of the black antelope. This horn representing the birth place of Indra is handed over to the sacrificer. "Verily he makes the sacrifice united with the womb, the gift with the womb, for union with the womb." "For ploughing thee, for good crop", he says. Therefore plants bear fruit. If he were to scratch himself with his hand his offspring would be liable to the itch; if he were to smile, they would become naked (poor). He scratches himself with the horn of the black antelope and smiles, holding it for the protection of his offspring. He should not let go the horn of the black antelope before the bringing of the gifts (to the priests). If they were to let go the horn of the black antelope before the bringing up of the gift, the womb of his offspring will be liable to miscarriage. When the gifts have been brought, he casts away the horn of the black antelope back in the pit (*chātūllā*). The pit is the womb of the sacrificer; the horn of the black antelope is the womb verily he places womb in womb, that the sacrificer may have a womb."<sup>10</sup>

In the story of Vāk in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* it is said that Yajña was advised by the gods to meet Vāk but she refused to meet him, but recounted

<sup>10</sup> *Taittiriya Samhitā*, translated by A. B. Keith, VI, 1. 3. 6-7.



her stand after he had wooed her. However, when she came to Yajña the Devas cut her off from the Asuras and thus they were deprived of their speech. Yajña united with her but Indra fearing that a demon was to be born of the union entered her womb, tore it and placed it on the head of Yajña. The womb is represented by the horn of the deer.

The legend in the *Taittirīya Samhitā* leaves no doubt about the sex symbolism of the antelope horn whose union with Yajña results in a good harvest. The *Śatapatha* legend also equates antelope horn with the womb and emphasizes its importance as a symbol of fertility and procreation which is also the ultimate end of Yajña.<sup>11</sup>

The idea of *śrīṅga* as a symbol of fertility and procreation is further emphasized in the *Kapishāla-Kaṭha Samhitā*, XLII. 2.<sup>12</sup> It says:

"The Upāmsu-cup is the female breast (*śrīṅgam*); the Antaryāma-cup is the semen virile of Indra; the draught of Soma is the offspring. While partaking of these cups, Rajana, son of Kuṇi, feels as if he were suckling the female breast (*śrīṅga*). In that one offers them during the opening part of the sacrifice, as if he unites a couple for procreation at the commencement of the sacrifice."

Here the comparison of the Upāmsu-cup with *śrīṅga*, whose secondary meaning is the breast or more aptly the teat whose blackness and pointedness may well compare with horn seems to be symbolical. The breast signifying milk and the semen virile naturally indicate procreation. The contribution of the two cups one resembling the *śrīṅga* and the other the semen in the beginning of the sacrifice symbolized the sexual union. It is also possible that the Upāmsu-cup may as well represent rhyton from which Soma, signifying fertility, might have been drunk.

In the elaborate ritual prescribed in the *Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka*<sup>13</sup> in connection with the Mahāvratā ceremony which marked the commencement of the year at the winter solstice. In this ceremony the Śrotriya was provided with a swing, Udgātṛi with a seat made of *muñja* grass, the Adhvaryu stood on the bundle of *muñja* grass and the other priests sat on mats. There were a lute and other musical instruments including the drums; the maidens who were to dance on that occasion were provided with water jugs. A horn and chariot were kept ready and a bow and arrow for the use of a king or a distinguished archer, the target being a round skin. Behind the Agnidhira a hole was dug and covered with the skin of the sacrificial animal. After the due ceremonies the swing was erected and the Hotṛi mounted it. Then with the recital of Mahāvratā Sāman, music was played accompanied by drumming and loud cries. The maids

<sup>11</sup> *Śata. Brā.*, III, 3, 1. 28.

<sup>12</sup> I am thankful for the translation of the passage to Shri C. G. Kashikar of the Vaidika Sansodhana Mandala, Poona.

<sup>13</sup> *The Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka*, translated by A. B. Keith, London, 1908, pp. 73 ff.



carrying water pitchers danced singing, "O this is sweet, this is sweet". Then the king from the chariot shot three arrows on the hide. In the end the drums were split up, the maidens deposited their pitchers on the altar and the ceremony came to an end.

There is no doubt that the concept of the ceremony and the equipments used have a symbolical significance. The ceremony according to Keith is a solar symbol, which is supported by sunbird-shaped altar and the chariot signifying the sun. The horn signifies abundance and procreation associated with the solar energy. The drums and the other musical instruments and dancing characterize the popular nature of the ritual. The performance was accompanied by a running commentary of praise and criticism by two persons selected for the purpose. This was probably a priestly refinement as all the versions call it a dialogue between a Brahmachârin and a prostitute (*brahmachâripumschalayoh sampravādah*). It should be noted here that in a Holi dance in Bundelkhand and Braja area two men participate, one acting as a prostitute and the other a Bābājī or a Brahmachârin equipped with a short crooked staff or horn. They exchange an obscene dialogue and then dance. As a matter of fact sexual union (*bhūtānām cha maithunam*) formed a part of the ceremony.<sup>14</sup> These two were supposed promoters of fertility. The dancing of the women pouring water on the fire probably symbolized rainfall. The king shooting three arrows on a dead skin perhaps symbolized piercing of the sky to bring down the rain.

Dr. S. C. Sarkar suggests that Mahāvratā might have been a polite form of *hallisaka* or *lāṭarāsaka* dance of refined people or the Holi, or *Rāsa* of the more vulgar. He however, assigns the musical feature in the ceremony to Dravidian-Kolariyan affinities with their seasonal orgies and licentiousness.<sup>15</sup>

The black antelope horn had certain purificatory significance as well. It is mentioned in the *Śata. Brā.*, V, 4. 2. 1, that in the performance of the Rājasūya the king rubbed his body with the water sprinkled with the horn of a black antelope because the water represented vigour. The symbolism of this rite seems to be that the water which represents vigour and the source of all life fortified by the magical propensities of the horn strengthened the king's authority.

The symbolical importance of the skin and the horn of an antelope is apparent in certain Vedic sacrifices. In the Agnistoma sacrifice the Adhvaryu handed over the skin and horn of a black antelope to the sacrificer, the horn being tied to his garment. After suspending it to the garment the officiating priest lifting up a clod of earth addresses it as the symbol of a good harvest. In the same sacrifice the Adhvaryu raises gold with sacrificial dagger or with the horn of black antelope and moves it from left to right. This ceremony was expected to encircle the demons (*T. Ā.*, I, 2. 5)<sup>16</sup>. In the last stage

<sup>14</sup> *Taittirīya Aranyaka*, V, 1. 5. 13.

<sup>15</sup> S. C. Sarkar, *Some Aspects of the earlier Social Life of India*, London, 1928 p. 94, fn. 7.

<sup>16</sup> W. Caland and V. Henry, *L'Agnistoma*, Paris, 1906, p. 297.



of the pressing ceremony of Soma the horn was deposited in the Chātvalā or Uttaravedī's hole.

According to the *Bhāradvāja Śrauta Sūtra*, X, 6, 13 the horn which has three or five curves by the right is handed over to the sacrificer with the formula, "Thou art the birthplace of Indra; do thou not harm me" (*T. S.*, I, 2, 2, 3)<sup>17</sup>. Then he should scratch the limbs with the formula, "O horn, loosen their knots, if anything has stuck to the heart of this person, if anything has stuck to the mind of this (person)" (*Maṭrayaṇi Sam.* I, 2, 2)<sup>18</sup>. Further in the course of the ritual the Adhvaryu draws a line with the horn of the black antelope with the formula, "Wealth be with us" (*T. S.*, I, 2, 5, 2)<sup>19</sup>.

One very interesting point which emerges from the above references is that the antelope horn at some distant past was used as a hoe for tillage and therefore it symbolizes a good harvest bringing wealth in its turn. It also seems to have been used as a fetish to guard people against demons.

But besides the ritualistic and symbolic significance of the horn there are references to prove its purely magical quality. In this connection it should be noted that for ritualistic purpose only the black antelope's horn is mentioned in the Vedas, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Śrauta Sūtras*. The *Kauśika Sūtra* is, however, an exception. Here for the first time the magical and symbolic significance of ivory are stressed. The *Sūtra* while prescribing the charm to secure power observes<sup>20</sup>:

हस्तिवचं मिति हस्तिनम् (१) हस्तिदन्तं बध्नाति (२)  
लोमानि जतुना संदिह्य जातरूपेण पिषात्य (३)

As regards the *Sūtra* 1 the commentator Keśava explains that in the performance of this charm a man stood by the side of the tusk. No further details of the ritual are available, though there is every likelihood that some kind of magical rite must have been performed to ensure or increase the efficaciousness of the ivory which was supposed to possess miraculous property of imparting power. In the rite mentioned in *Sūtra* 2 the charm was tied round his wrist, or even worn as an amulet or as an ivory bead (*dantamanim*). Even the hair of an elephant, fixed with the lac and put inside a gold amulet served as a potent charm.

During the historical times, it will be seen later on, the bull horn along with the rhinoceros-horn and elephant tusk, was used for lustrating the king at the time of his coronation, though in Vedic literature it is only the black antelope horn which served that purpose. The *Kauśika Sūtra* XXXI, 6, which mentions remedial charms for every possible disease and injury, real or fancied

<sup>17</sup> *Bhāradvāja Śrauta Sūtra*, X, 6, 16.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*, X, 6, 17.

<sup>19</sup> *B. S. S.*, X, 6, 17.

<sup>20</sup> Maurice Bloomfield, (ed.): *Kauśika Sūtra*, New Haven, 1890, XIII, 1-3.



and for driving out the demons, the role of a bull horn, provided it had fallen by itself is emphasized. The meaning of the *Sūtra* is rather obscure. But according to the commentator Keśava the horn was filled with water and then charmed; it was then sipped or sprinkled.

A peculiar trait associated with the horn in the *Kaṭhika Sūtra*, 105, 106, is that if properly charmed it made the fetters snap and fall.

Another magical purpose of the horn which has nothing to do with fertility is mentioned in the *Hiranyakeśin Grīhyasūtra*, I, 4, १३. 2-4. It is said that if the sacrificer wished that one of his companions or pupils, or a servant should remain faithful to him and not leave him, then after taking bath in the morning and putting on clean garments he should start the practice of the charm. He is also advised to keep patience with the servants etc. during the day and only speak with the Brāhmaṇas. During the night he is advised to urinate into the horn of a living animal and then proceed to the dwelling of the person whom he wanted to restrain from leaving him. While walking thrice round the house sprinkling the urine, he muttered the charm invoking Indra to bind him with his bond and requesting the god to drive him (servants etc.) back to him.

The epics and the Purāṇas also lay stress on the sacred character of the horn, which formed an important article in the ritualistic implements used in the consecration ceremony of the royal coronation. In the coronation ceremony of Rāma, he, following the Vedic tradition of the Rājasūya as propounded by the *Śatapatha Brā.* held a black antelope horn in his hand (*kuraṅgaśrīṅgaṇam cha*).<sup>21</sup> It is further mentioned that in the coronation ceremony of Sugrīva<sup>22</sup> the monkey chiefs brought water from the oceans and filled it in the golden pitchers. He was lustrated with water filled in bull horns (*śiṣhabhaśrīṅgaṇā*) and golden vessels in accordance with the procedure laid down by the sacred books and great teachers.

In this connection the following *lōka* from the *Kaṇṇaparoṣa* of the *Mahābhārata* is worth quoting;<sup>23</sup>

तौदपूर्णविषाणंश्च द्वैपखङ्गमहर्षये ।  
मणिमुक्तामयैश्चान्यैः पुष्पगन्धैस्तथोषधैः ॥<sup>24</sup>

Duryodhana consecrated Karna to the office of the commander-in-chief by lustrating him with the sacred water filled in the scooped out tusks of elephants, and in rhinoceros and bull horns and by scattering jewels and using fragrant and lucky herbs in the ceremony.

<sup>21</sup> *Rāmāyana*, II, 16, 21.

<sup>22</sup> *Rāmāyana*, IV, 26, 33-34.

<sup>23</sup> *M. B.*, VIII, 6, 37, *Journal of Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XVII (1935), part II, pp. 92-94.

<sup>24</sup> In this text *śiṣpa* would mean 'of leopard' which is senseless in the context as leopard has no horn or tusk. Dr. V. S. Agrawala adopts *śiṣpa* meaning elephant of the Vulgate text as the correct reading as it fits in perfectly with the context.



From the references above it is clear that in the age of the epics at least besides the black antelope horn of the Vedic period the bull horn, the rhinoceros<sup>24</sup> horn and the elephant tusk were also regarded as a symbol of the treasures, i.e., cornucopia.

The horn seems to have symbolized water and its power as well. In the *Sata. Brā.* I, 8.1. 1-5 the Fish (*jhaṣa*) which rescued Manu's boat was horned one. In the *Mahābhārata*, III, 85 the story of Manu and the Fish (*matya*) informs us that the fish which Manu had raised gained such stupendous size in the course of time that it had to be released into the sea. This creature had a horn to which Manu's boat was tied at the time of the Great Flood. There is no doubt that the horn of the Fish here signifies protection.

The association of Śiva and also Viṣṇu with horn in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* is obvious. In the *Mahābhārata*, XIII, 1263 one of the names of Śiva is Śrīṅgin 'the Horned One', a designation which as we shall see later on is justified by the numismatic evidence.

In the *Līṅga Purāṇa* however, the designation of Śiva as a horned god is made even clearer. He is designated at one place<sup>25</sup> as Dīptaśrīṅga and Ekaśrīṅga. Dīptaśrīṅga or 'the Flaming Horn' naturally connects Rudra-Śiva with Agni.<sup>26</sup> The designation Ekaśrīṅga 'Single-Horned' specifically mentions that Śiva had a single horn. Again Śiva is designated as Śrīṅgin 'the Horned One' and Śrīṅgapriya 'One who likes horn'.<sup>27</sup>

It should also be noted here that Śiva in the *Līṅga Purāṇa* is designated as 'Goat-shaped' and 'Antelope-shaped' (*ajascha mṛigarūpascha*)<sup>28</sup> which may emphasize his character as a hunter hunting wild goats and antelopes—animals that are closely associated with Agni in later Vedic literature.<sup>29</sup> Śiva is called the 'Protector of Treasures'<sup>30</sup> thus assuming the role of Kubera with whom he is closely connected in Paurāṇic literature. He is also called Makara<sup>31</sup> the leviathan moving in the waters and is obviously a symbol of the waters.<sup>32</sup> The *makara* which is horned in early Indian art is supposed to secrete jewels in its jaws,<sup>33</sup> the extrication of which was supposed to be a great act of valour.

It is also interesting to note that in Śaivite rituals horn played an important part. It is mentioned in the *Līṅga Purāṇa*, XXV, 22, that a Śiva-līṅga was lustrated with the horn and the cups made of *palāśa* leaves. To the lustration

<sup>25</sup> *Līṅga Purāṇa*, XXI, 25.

<sup>26</sup> A. A. Macdonell, *The Vedic Mythology*, Reprint, Varanasi, 1963, pp. 74-75.

<sup>27</sup> *Līṅga Purāṇa*, LXV, 65.

<sup>28</sup> *Ib.*, LXV, 67.

<sup>29</sup> Macdonell, *loc. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>30</sup> *Līṅga Purāṇa*, LXV, 60.

<sup>31</sup> *Ib.*, LXV, 16.

<sup>32</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Yogas*, Part II, Washington D.C., 1931, p. 47.

<sup>33</sup> Bhartṛhari, *Nīlīlata*, 4.



water were added the *kula* grass and flowers. The *Mṛigendrāgama*<sup>34</sup> prescribes that the libation ladle (*arghya-pātra*) should be shaped like a *palāta*-leaf or lotus-petal. It was made of faultless conchshell, mother-of-pearl and horn etc. and decorated with lotus design.

The horn, however, is not the prerogative of Śiva alone, it is associated with Viṣṇu as well. In the *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, he is called Mahāśrīṅga 'Lofty Horned' (57), Ekāśrīṅga 'Single-Horned' (81), and Śrīṅgin, the 'Horned One' (85). It is difficult to be sure whether the followers of Viṣṇu were consciously appropriating this attributes of Śiva or whether the horn symbolizing power, fertility and procreation had the same significance for Śiva and Viṣṇu.

An interesting reference to cornucopia occurs in the *Matya Purāṇa* in connection with the description of Yajña Varāha,<sup>35</sup>

छायापत्नी सहायो वै मणिशृङ्ग इवोत्थितः ।

It is evident from the line that Yajña Varāha is accompanied by his wife Chhāyā, but the editor is not sure of the correct interpretation of the word *maṇiśrīṅga*. Apparently, the upward curved tusks of Yajña Varāha are compared with *maṇiśrīṅga* the 'jewel producing horn' i.e., cornucopia. It is also possible that the tusk of Varāha had the same significance as the elephant tusk and the antelope horn, as Varāha extricated Earth, the repository of all treasures, from the nether world and supported her on his tusks.

That the meaning and purpose of the cornucopia was very well understood in the Gupta period is evident from the following references :

In the *Raghuvamśa*, II. 2, Sudakṣiṇā, wife of Dilīpa, holding an *akṣata* or rice pot in her hand and following the Wishing Cow Nandīnī in the forest circumambulated her. Then offering obeisance to her, Sudakṣiṇā worshipped the interspace between the horns (of the cow) which is described as 'the very gateway to the attainment of prosperity' (*śrīṅgāntaram doṣāminvāitnasiddhiḥ*).

One of the most important references to the cornucopia, however, appears in the following couplets in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* :<sup>36</sup>

निधिशृङ्गान्वृषात्राजलिधिस्ताम्रतङ्गजान् ।  
निधीन्विद्याधरान् राजनृपयो गरुहस्तथा ॥ १५ ॥  
हनुमाश्च सुमंगलया ये च लोके प्रकीर्तितः ।  
लिखितव्या महाराज गृहेषु सततं नृणाम् ॥ १६ ॥

Dr. Stella Kramrisch has translated the couplets as follows : "... bulls with the horns (immersed) in the sea, and (men) with their hands sticking out of the sea (whilst their) body is bent (under water) ... (oh) great king,

<sup>34</sup> *Mṛigendrāgama*, VI. Ed. by N. R. Bhatt, Pondichery, 1962, p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> V. Raghavan, *Matya Text relating to Yajña Varāha*, Purāṇa, Vol. V, 2, p. 241.

<sup>36</sup> *Viṣṇudharmottara*, III, Edited by Piyabala Shah, Baroda, 1959: 43, 15-16.



the Vidyādhara, the nine gems, sages, Garuḍa, Hanumān, all those who are celebrated as auspicious on the earth, should always be painted in the residential houses of men."<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, the translation hardly gives any sense. Dr. Priyabala Shah's explanation hardly improves the matter. She explains: "All those things which are regarded as auspicious by people such as bulls with *Nidhi* horns, elephants with *Nidhi* trunks, (nine) *Nidhis*, Vidyādhara, sages, Garuḍa and Hanumān should generally be shown in them."<sup>38</sup>

I have translated the couplets as follows:<sup>39</sup>

"O King, in the residences of men should always be painted the 'treasure horns' (*nidhiśrīṅgān*) of the bulls, the 'treasure handles' (*nidhihastān*) made of elephant tusks (*matanḡajān*), the *nidhis*, the Vidyādhara, the Rishis (*śiddhas*), Garuḍa, the 'wide-jawed one (mask)' (*hanumān*), the auspicious women (*samāṅgalyāḥ*) and other auspicious symbols famous all over the world."

The *Vishnudharmottara* therefore leaves no doubt that in the Gupta period to which probably the text belongs, *nidhiśrīṅga* represented by the bull horn and the elephant tusk was a well recognised motif associated with good luck and fortune.

The legends of Rishyaśrīṅga in the *Mahābhārata* and *Ramāyaṇa* again emphasize the association of the horn with the rain. It is related in *M.B.*, II, chapters 110-112, that the sage Vibhāṇḍaka Kāśyapa while practising austerities near a lake saw the nymph Urvaśī. At the sight of her his semen fell and it was lapped up by a hind drinking water from the lake. She was as a matter of fact a daughter of the gods, whom Brahmā had transformed into a hind destined to be freed when she gave birth to a sage. In due course she gave birth to a son who was named Rishyaśrīṅga, because he had a horn on his head. The innocent sage thereafter led a quiet life in the forest. At that time the territories of Lomapāda, the king of Aṅga and a friend of Daśaratha, went without rain because Indra was prejudiced against him, as he had been false to a Brahman. Naturally, after appeasing the Brahmans he discussed the ways and means with his ministers for bringing Rishyaśrīṅga who alone could bring the life-giving rains to his country. With their advice a courtesan accompanied by a number of women was commissioned to bring the Rishi to Aṅga's capital Champā. The clever courtesan constructed a floating hermitage which she left at a short distance from Vibhāṇḍaka's hermitage, and then sent her daughter to tempt Rishyaśrīṅga. She managed to lure him with palatable food, drinks, garments and flowers and after arousing his passion with tender caresses left him under some pretext. Poor Rishyaśrīṅga innocent as he was of the viles of the world, on being questioned by his father informed him that he pined to meet the beautiful Brahmachārīn. His father at once guessed what was happen-

<sup>37</sup> Stella Kramrich, *The Vishnudharmottara* (Part III), Calcutta, 1928, pp. 60-61.

<sup>38</sup> *Vishnudharmottara-Purāṇa*, Third Khanda, Vol. II, Baroda, 1961, pp. 135-136.

<sup>39</sup> *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum*, No. 7, 1959-1962, p. 8.



ing and tried to dissuade his son not to bother with the Brahmachārin. But while he was away the courtesans allured Rishyaśringa to the boat and brought him to Lomapāda, who had prepared a beautiful forest for the pleasure of the Rishi and kept him in female apartments. Suddenly the rain poured down. Pleased at that the king gave away his daughter Śāntā in marriage to him.<sup>40</sup>

In the Rishyaśringa legend a point that deserves our attention is that his horn must have been the horn of an antelope because he was born from a hind. The association of the black antelope horn with the waters, Indra the rain god, fertility and procreation has already been stressed.

The horn in Vedic literature is mainly associated with the gods, though as will be seen later on, horned goddesses are known in early Indian sculpture. The horn is associated with the temples of gods and goddesses. Kshemendra refers to the association of Śrī with ivory in the following couplet which has a double meaning :

दन्तेषु मलपूर्णेषु कम्बले घृम पिङ्गले ।  
नूनं स्थिता श्रीर्लुब्धस्य जयन्त्यव्रतवासिनी ॥<sup>41</sup>

The first meaning of the verse is that Śrī indeed resides in the dirty teeth and the smoke-blackened blanket of a miser (*lubdha*) as she is habituated to patronize the lowly and despicable.

The second meaning of the couplet is that Śrī lives in a dirty elephant tusk covered with a smoke blackened blanket belonging to a hunter as she patronizes the lowly untouchables. This meaning points out to a certain custom of the elephant hunters who worshipped the tusks as the symbol of Śrī-Lakṣmī. It was natural as ivory was a lucrative source of income in ancient times.

## II

Belief in the efficacy of the magical property of the horn seems to have been of wide prevalence in Central Asia, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Spiti, Ladakh etc. Sir Aurel Stein while moving from Aksu in Central Asia along the foot of the Tien-shan range to Uch-Turfan and hearing about the existence of some ancient town searched and found out Kaka-jade peaks. In the Chal-Koide grazing grounds he found the enclosure of the Ziarat had all the usual votive offerings of the orthodox Muhammadan shrines in those parts—horse skulls, horns of *ovispoli* and wild goat, rags fastened on staffs, etc.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> For other versions of the story see *Alambusā Jātaka* (No. 525) and *Nalanikā Jātaka* (No. 526). The Rishyaśringa legend seems to have been very much alive in the Buddhist world of the 7th century. Yün Chwang points out to a tope in the neighbourhood of Peshawar, where the Rishi who is called Ekasringa is supposed to have lived. T. Watters, *On Yün Chwang*, Vol. I, London, 1904, p. 218.

<sup>41</sup> *Devopaisā*, II, 30.

<sup>42</sup> *J. R. A. S.*, 1910, pp. 842-844.



In Ladakh the ram horns are fixed to the stems of fruit trees as a propitiatory offering at the time of an eclipse and the trees thus protected are believed to bear an unfailing crop of the choicest fruits.<sup>43</sup>

Dr. Francke found on a rock between Kargil and Chanigund and Shimsha Kharbu at a place called Dongga in the Dard District of Kashmir, the figures of ibexes. On further enquiry he was informed that the ibex is a symbol of fertility in Ladakh, similar to the ram in Lahaul. The pre-Buddhist divinities Kesar, Bruguma, etc., are invoked to grant children. When one is born, the neighbours make a present of flour ibex to the happy family.<sup>44</sup>

The local shrines in the Himalayas are decorated with the horns of the wild sheep, ibexes and goats. In Persia as well many houses are adorned with ram-heads fixed to the corners near the roof with a view to protect them from misfortune. In Baluchistan and Afghanistan it is customary to place the horns of the wild goats and sheep on the walls of forts and mosques. It is said that Akbar covered his *Kot-Minārs* or milestones with the horns of the deer he had hunted. The conical shape of the Banjara woman's headdress was originally a horn and many classes of fakirs tie a piece of horn round their necks. We have the well-known Horn of Plenty, and it is very common in folk-tales to find objects taken out of the ears or horns of the helpful animals.<sup>45</sup>

In India proper, the magical property of the horn is appreciated both by the Hindus and Buddhists. It is a well-known fact that in Uttara Pradesh till recently stag horns were hung at the entrance of the house to ward off evil and bring good fortune. Their medical value was also well recognized. In the valley of the Chandrabhāgā (the Chenab) in every Devī temple some splendid horns are found. It has been observed that when the animals in winter come down to the altitude of 6,000 feet they are driven back in the snow drifts and sacrificed. After their heads are cut off, the horns are put upside down in the pent roof of the temple.<sup>46</sup> In his recent tour of Spiti, Mr. G. D. Khosla saw in the Kye Gompa nailed on the doorway a stuffed ibex and *barhal* with beautifully preserved horns.<sup>47</sup>

The antelope horn, however, has a special sanctity among the Gorakhpānṭhī *yogīs*. They formerly carried the horns (*siṅgi*) as a part of their equipment which they blew. Even now they carry the *siṅgād* or whistle made either of black buck or stag horn or of rhinoceros horn, which is a necessary part of the equipment of a Yogī. The whistle made of black antelope's horn is the most popular. A story is related in this connection. Bhartṛgharī, while going after a stag accompanied by seventy hīnds, was unable to follow him. The stag, however, allowed himself to be shot on certain conditions, one of which was that his horn should be used for a Yogī's whistle.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> W. Crook, *The Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, Vol. 1, London, 1896, p. 23.

<sup>44</sup> A. H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Part I, Calcutta, 1914, pp. 104-105, Pl. XLIV.

<sup>45</sup> Crook, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 225.

<sup>46</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, XXVII, p. 56.

<sup>47</sup> G. D. Khosla, *Himalayan Circuit*, London, 1950, p. 101.

<sup>48</sup> G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhpānṭh and the Namphāṭh Yogīs*, Calcutta, 1938, pp. 13-14.



It is evident, therefore, that in Indian folklore and religions the protective, procreative and medicinal values of the horn are well realized. It is also significant to note that even in the Muslim mosques and *Ziirats* of Central Asia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan, horn appears as a protective charm, doubtlessly the survival of an ancient belief which persisted even after the advent of Islam. The tying of the ram horns to fruit trees in order to increase their fertility in Ladakh also points to the horn as a symbol of fertility. The use of horns in the Himalayan region at least was not confined to the temples of the gods only, but the hanging of the horn is a usual feature of the Devī temples as well. The importance attached to the horn by the Yogīs of Gorakhnath sect shows the survival of a Śaivite ritual in which horn is treated with sanctity.

Magical belief in the horn was not confined only to Vedic India alone but had a recognized place in the religions of ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Hittites, the Cretans, the Phoenicians, the Greeks<sup>49</sup> and the Harappans as exemplified by the sculptural and seal evidences. In Babylonia the higher gods and genii wear horn on the heads, and the headdress worn by the gods, kings and priests had a double pair of horns. The goddess Nentu is shown with a horn. The Hittite gods wear caps ornamented with several pairs of horns. The Phoenician goddesses usually wear the horns of a cow. The Egyptian goddesses Hathor and Isis wear horns and the sun god Ra sometimes wears a disk of ram's horns; besides these there are other gods and goddesses who wear horns. In Greece, Dionysos wears bull horns and Pan and Satyres wear goat horns.

The survival of horns in ancient civilizations is the relic of early animal form of the gods and goddesses. The horns in animals represent the destructive force as they are used by horned animals to attack and if possible to gore down their enemy and therefore the horns symbolize power. The horns also served as weapons during the Stone Ages. Their use as weapons and arms—harpoons, picks, wedges, chisels, punches, hammers etc. survived in the Bronze Ages as well.

Taking into consideration the uses to which the horn was put, it becomes a natural symbol of strength. In Sumer and Babylonia the horns were commonly used to emphasize the divine character of the gods. They were however worn by the kings and priests as well as presumably they were regarded as the incarnations or representatives of the horned gods. In Egypt as well, the Pharaohs sometimes wore a horned headdress, as an emblem of strength. The horned headdress of Moses also indicated the same idea.

The horns in the ancient world were also regarded as imbued with magic. It was accepted that the spirit of the animal acted through its horns. The heads of the horned animals were placed over the doors as protectives. The cow and bull horns served this purpose in Greece. And as has already been

<sup>49</sup> *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. See Horn.



pointed out in India, Persia, and Afghanistan the horns of the stags, oxen, wild goats and rams served the same protective purpose.

Sometimes the altars were provided with horns. The Hebrew altars had a projection on each corner called 'the horns of the altar' on which the blood of the sacrificial animals was sprinkled. The Cretan and the Mycenaean 'horns of consecration' were of great ritual importance. "At times", Sir Arthur Evans writes,<sup>50</sup> "these have the appearance of being actual horns of oxen, but more generally they seem to be a conventional imitation of what must be regarded as unquestionably the original type—that is, a kind of impost or base terminating at the two ends in two horn-like excrescences. Sometimes the cult object appears on the altar. At other times it rests above the entablature of an archway connected with a sacred tree or on the roof of a shrine. It is frequently set at the foot of the sacred trees." In India as well, horns served as supports for altars, and also as entablature of an arch.

Cornucopia, the emblem of the gods of plenty, was also associated with the goddess Fortuna and Copia. It was also given to the Tria, Fata, Diana and to the Lares. The Earth-goddess emerging from the earth in Greek vase-painting holds a horn of plenty from which sometimes rises a child. The cornucopia was also associated with many gods of fertility. "Probably a horn became symbolic of fruitfulness because it belonged to an animal associated with fertility—bull or goat—and perhaps because it was a drinking vessel, not only among the primitives but civilized peoples. The cornucopia itself represented magic potency. But, in whatever ways such productive power was assigned to horns, this primarily depended on the fact that such a power was first attributed to the animals possessing them, the power often working through their horns. This conception was sometimes mythically represented, or in the case of the stag Eikpyrnir, from whose horn water continually trickles down to feed the rivers of the underworld, and the Iranian primal ox Gayomart, from whose horns spring fruits."<sup>51</sup>

### III

For the understanding of the symbolism of horn in Egypt, Babylonia, Crete and Greece, sculpture and painting, vases and terracottas and even votive offerings are of immense help. Unfortunately, the same condition is not valid in India. As we have already seen Vedic literature is eloquent about the horns as an emblem of good fortune and fertility, and their medicinal, magical and protective qualities are emphasized. However, there are no sculptures or paintings of the Vedic period as yet available to support the literary data. Fortunately, the Indus Valley culture datable from c. 2500 to 1500 B.C. has supplied sufficient data to support the Vedic evidence about the symbolism of the horn. The most important from our point of view is a seal, on which the horned deity has been identified by John Marshall as Śiva Paśupati or the

<sup>50</sup> *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. XXI, p. 195 ff. quoted in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, S. V. Horn.

<sup>51</sup> *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, p. 795.



Lord of the Beasts (Fig. 1). To quote him, "The three-faced god on a roughly carved seal is seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of *yoga*. His arms are outstretched, his hands with thumbs to front are resting on his knees. The lower limbs are bare and the phallus seemingly exposed. Crowning his hair is a pair of horns meeting in a tall head-dress. To either sides of the god are four animals, an elephant and tiger on his proper right, a rhinoceros and buffalo on his left. Beneath the throne are two deer standing with heads regardant and horns turned to the centre."<sup>52</sup>

Two similar seals depicting Śiva were excavated by Mackay. The seal No. 222 depicts Śiva seated in *yogamudrā* on a low dias whose legs represent those of a bull. His outstretched arms are intended to rest on the knees. He wears a large number of bracelets. The head-dress is a *pipal* twig, the horns are separate from the head and probably fastened to the base of the twig.<sup>53</sup>

In the seal 235 Śiva is seated on the ground. In between the horns there appears to be a sprig of flowers.<sup>54</sup> "The sprig of flowers or leaves rising from the head between the horns strongly suggest a fertility or vegetation god."<sup>55</sup> It is noteworthy that the horns in seal 235 probably represent antelope horns, as they are knotted.

In seal 430<sup>56</sup> a tree goddess or spirit on a *pipal* tree (Fig. 2) is represented appearing before a kneeling worshipper behind whom stands a goat with human face. In the lower register appear seven ministrants or votaries, each dressed in a short kilt and wearing a long pigtail and a spray of leaves or a feather in the hair. The tree spirit is apparently nude, but has a pair of horns while the worshipper and the ministrants are likewise horned.

The figure shown in seal 347<sup>57</sup> represents a woman with a tiger's body. On the head are two spiral horns extended laterally which might be those of a goat. Rising between them is a similar spike of flowers or leaves as the one in seal 235. The human portion is nude. Whether the figure represents Durgā it is difficult to say. The seal 357 represents wrestling between a horned female figure and a horned beast (Fig. 4).

From Mohenjodaro have also been found horned terracotta masks<sup>58</sup> (Fig. 3). Mackay found some from the lower levels at Mohenjodaro.<sup>59</sup> On the strength of a horned head<sup>60</sup> Mackay suggests that these horns were smooth and round though he found it difficult to decide whether they belonged to short horned or the Brahmanī bull.

<sup>52</sup> Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and The Indus Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 52, Pl. XII, 17. London, 1931.

<sup>53</sup> E. Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro*, 2 vols., Delhi, 1937-38, p. 355, Pl. LXXXVII,

<sup>54</sup> 222. *Id.*, p. 335, Pl. LXXXVII, 235.

<sup>55</sup> E. Mackay, *Early Indus Civilization*, London, 1948, p. 57.

<sup>56</sup> Mackay, *Further Excavations*, pp. 337-38, Pl. XCIX, A.

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*, pp. 338-339, Pl. LXXXIX, 347.

<sup>58</sup> Marshall, *loc. cit.*, Pl. XCV, 1-3.

<sup>59</sup> Mackay, *Further Excavations*, II, Pl. LXXXVI, 1-4.

<sup>60</sup> *Id.*, II, Pl. LXXII, 7.



The early horns of a mask<sup>61</sup> are however of quite different types and may be those of a goat.

The unique terracotta figurine of a goddess is also horned (Fig 3).<sup>62</sup> She has prominent breasts. There are two pairs of horns of which the hinder pair have lost their tips.<sup>63</sup>

At Harappa, however, only two horned figures were found. One male figure wears a rolled bandeau from which protrude a pair of horns.<sup>64</sup>

There is also overwhelming evidence to show that animals and specially horned animals were worshipped by the Indus Valley people. The seal amulets indicate that two varieties of the urus-bull, the elephant, the tiger, the buffalo, two kinds of oxen—one short-horned animal and the other a humped bull—the rhinoceros, the crocodile etc. were sacred animals. The antelopes, however, are rarely represented.<sup>65</sup> It has been suggested that these animals were kept in captivity and were regarded as vehicles of the gods, or probably represented the survival of primitive animal worship. The horned bull and the tiger on certain seals show connection with the Śaivite cult. The wild buffalo renowned for its ferocity perhaps stood as a symbol of strength. The connection of the goat with a god or goddess of fertility shows it as a symbol of fertility and procreation.

The older view that the bearers of the Cemetery H culture were the destroyers of the older Harappa has now been given up. But though not much is known about the date of the Cemetery H culture, the pottery painting gives an insight into the religion of the people in which horned animals and even birds played an important part.<sup>66</sup> One significant point in the pottery decoration is the horned peacock (Fig. 5 b) often carrying within the roundel of its belly a nude standing figure. It is, however, difficult to agree with Mr. Vats that such a figure represents the ethereal body of the dead. The possibility could not be ruled out that the figure represents some prototype of the historical Kārtikeya whose vehicle is the peacock. The figure in the belly only shows that the painter had not yet mastered the technique of establishing exact relationship between the rider and his mount. The scene on an inverted bowl is of particular interest in connection with the horned figures.<sup>67</sup> The field is covered with stars and leaves. In one scene in between two horned animals suggested as bovine by Vats, but probably representing stylized deer or antelopes stands a highly stylized human figure with birdlike face and horned head (Fig. 5 a) securing the animals by the neck with a rope held in either hand. He also holds the bow.

<sup>61</sup> Mackay, *Further Excavations*, II, Pl. LXXVI, 2.

<sup>62</sup> *Ib.*, II, Pl. LXXVI, 3.

<sup>63</sup> *Ib.*, I, p. 267.

<sup>64</sup> M.S. Vats, *Excavations at Harappa*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1940, p. 296.

<sup>65</sup> Mackay, *Further Excavations*, Vol. I, p. 332.

<sup>66</sup> M.S. Vats, *loc. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 207 ff; Vol. II, Pls. LXII-LXIII.

<sup>67</sup> Vats, *loc. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 207; Vol. II, Pl. LXII, 1(a), 1(b). I differ from Mr. Vats both in description and identification of the scene.



and arrow in his left hand. A couple of peacocks appear on the left and a dog is shown pulling the tail of the animal. It is interesting to note that while only the hind quarter of the animal is shown in outline, the forequarter is blocked in. Proceeding from the left to right we find the representation of a mountain goat (*mārkhor*) (Fig. 5 c) with huge flaring out horns from which stylized flowers or leaves (not *trifolia* as proposed by Vats) are springing. The flowers or plants are again shown issuing forth from the horns of an antelope on either side of the nude figure which is the reduplication of the previous figure. In another painted potsherd from the Cemetery H horned dancers standing or dancing hand to hand in association with an antelope are represented.<sup>68</sup>

It is also noticeable that the horn singly or in pair was used as a decorative motif in the pottery of the Cemetery H at Harappa<sup>69</sup> (Figs. 5 d and 5 f).

Whatever may be the origin of the Cemetery H Culture, there is no doubt that it shows certain features whose literary equivalents are found in Vedic literature. Let us at first take into consideration the nude horned figure equipped with the bow and arrow whose association with the antelope, the goat and the bull is apparent. Without committing ourselves to any theory the figure reminds one of Rudra-Śiva. The bow and arrow of Rudra are mentioned in the *Rigveda*.<sup>70</sup> And though the horn of Rudra is not expressly mentioned in Vedic literature the *Mahābhārata* mentions Śiva as Śṛiṅgin and Śṛiṅgapiya. He is also called Aja and Ajaikapāda i.e., 'Goat' and Mṛiga 'Antelope'.<sup>71</sup> In iconography he is shown in the form of a hunter carrying the carcass of an antelope. It is also significant to note that from the horns of some of the antelopes and a goat associated with him spring flowers and plants emphasizing their relationship with fertility.

The great void between the Harappan and Vedic culture shows the signs of being narrowed down. Dr. H. D. Sankalia in his recent article 'New light on the Indo-Iranian or Western Asiatic Relations between 1700 B.C.—1200 B.C.'<sup>72</sup> has ably summarized the results of recent excavations in India which throw light on this problem. Dr. Sankalia in this connection has drawn our attention that occasionally the bottom on the inside of the spouted bowl from Navdatoli bears grotesque figures.<sup>73</sup> It may be pointed out that a figure from Navdatoli bears a close resemblance to a similar figure from the Cemetery H at Harappa. The figure on the Navdatoli potsherd seems to have multiple horns and instead of the bow and arrow of the Cemetery H figure it holds a barbed lance in right hand.<sup>74</sup> The figure may represent Rudra. If that is so the barbed spear held by him should stand for the thunderbolt held in his

<sup>68</sup> Vats, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXIX, fig. 18.

<sup>69</sup> *Ib.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXII, figs. 3, 12; Pl. LXIII, 13, 17, 20 etc.

<sup>70</sup> *R. V.*, II, 33. 10-11; V, 42. 11; X, 125. 6.

<sup>71</sup> S. Sorensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata* Reprint, Delhi, 1963. See Śiva.

<sup>72</sup> *Archaeus Aiar*, Vol. XXVI, 3/4, pp. 319-332.

<sup>73</sup> *Ib.*, p. 316, fig. 3.

<sup>74</sup> Vats, *loc. cit.*, II, Pl. LXII, figs. 1 a-b.



arm (*vajrabāho*, *R. V.*, II, 33. 3). His lightning shaft (*vidyut*) discharged from the sky traverses the earth (*R. V.*, VII, 46. 3).

Dr. Sankalia has also observed that the stylized deer or antelope design though rare in the true Harappan is a favourite motif in the Chalcolithic cultures of India,<sup>75</sup> as in Iran and Western Asia. In particular he has pointed a large fragment of a huge buff slipped jar with a pinkish slip on the interior from Daimabad, District Ahmednagar, belonging to Phase I of the culture. In this piece is painted outside a jungle scene in which are depicted a tiger or leopard and a deer and antelope with hatched bodies and extremely elongated bodies and legs.<sup>76</sup>

I would like however to draw the attention of the scholars to two points in the decoration of the painted pottery of the Chalcolithic cultures which may be significant. A knotted oblique stalk which is a prominent feature of the decoration of the Chalcolithic pottery to my mind is not a plant motif but represents the knotted horn of an antelope. The 'pot-hook-spiral' or 'volute' appears to be the simplification of some plant motif. Some of the potsherds<sup>77</sup> forming part of the painted dishes show a curious design—a row of continuous horns along the rim followed by the 'pot and hook spiral'. If our surmise is correct the association of horns with plants in this motif is indicative of some fertility cult.

Whatever may be the connection with the Chalcolithic cultures of India and Vedic culture, one significant point is the common emphasis on the antelope and deer horns in Vedic rituals, and their representations on the ceramics of the Chalcolithic cultures in India. These parallels could not be dismissed as merely accidental; they seem to indicate certain common beliefs which inspired the Vedic ritualists and the Chalcolithic ceramists.

How far the horn motif has survived in Indian art has not yet been properly analysed. The early Buddhist art follows a demotic tradition, and therefore while it is based on the life of the Buddha who is represented by symbols, the ancillary figures of Yakshas, Yakshiṇīs and Nāgas and a wealth of decorative motifs handed down from the past follow a tradition whose visual representations being in wood have been irretrievably lost. For instance, predilection for antelope and antelope horns as a decorative motif in the Chalcolithic pottery is absent in the sculpture of the historical period. But here as well certain decorative elements have survived which tell their own story. For instance, in one of the Bharhut reliefs two stags running in opposite directions (Fig. 7) have attached to their horns an object decorated with pellets and lozenges which perhaps represents the cornucopia or a money bag.<sup>78</sup> At Bharhut also, for the first time in Indian art, the association of treasures with

<sup>75</sup> H. D. Sankalia and others, *The Excavations at Maheshwar and Nandatoli*, 1952-53, Poona, 1958, figs. 32-33, 43 etc.

<sup>76</sup> *Artibus Asiae*, XXVI, 3/4, p. 320.

<sup>77</sup> Sankalia, *loc. cit.*, fig. 25.

<sup>78</sup> B. Barua, *Bharhut*, Book III, Calcutta, 1937, Pl. XXVII, 22.



the elephant tusk is emphasized. In one of the decorative reliefs a kneeling elephant is shown spouting from its tusk the lotus rhizome (Fig. 6) from whose pods hang jewelled necklaces, earrings, bangles etc.<sup>79</sup>

The symbolism of elephant tusk is further emphasized in one of the decorative roundels in Stupa 2 at Sāñchi. An elephant blowing a lotus rhizome (Fig. 9) with bunches of grapes, a goose and the parrot pecking at the mangoes, and an antelope followed by a dog are represented.<sup>80</sup> Here the combination of the plant, the animal and the bird life is an indicative of fertility cult associated not only with the deer, the goat and the bull horns but also with ivory.<sup>81</sup>

It is also remarkable that *makara* (Fig. 8), an amphibian creature has been represented with two horns.<sup>82</sup> Apparently these horns on the snout copy the elephant tusk. In literature *makara* itself is regarded as one of the treasures. It seems being horned its efficaciousness as a treasure-giver is doubled. It is also possible that the elephant representing the ethereal waters and the *makara* symbolizing the terrestrial waters might have changed their place. Perhaps the elephant-faced *makara* in Indian art is a pointer to the unity of their purpose.

The purpose of the motif is further clarified from Bodhgayā, Sāñchi and Amarāvati sculptures. In a Bodhgayā relief a dwarf Yaksha is shown removing some small objects from the monster's jaws<sup>83</sup> and at Sāñchi Stūpa 3 a Yaksha is shown opening the jaw of a *makara*.<sup>84</sup> At Amarāvati the purpose of the motif is crystal clear. At one place a Devī or Yakshi is shown pulling out some jewels (Fig. 10) from the teeth of an elephant-headed *makara*.<sup>85</sup> At another place<sup>86</sup> a dwarfish Yaksha is shown pulling out some objects from the open mouth of a *makara* (Fig. 11).

One of the Amarāvati reliefs<sup>87</sup> (Fig. 12) depicts a *makara* on either side. They are spouting a lotus scroll, two tusked elephants and a deer probably indicating their relationship with the Water Cosmology.

At Sāñchi the symbolism of elephant-tusk is emphasized in another way. A Yaksha shown standing in one of the panels on the inner face of the west pillar of the Northern Gateway<sup>88</sup> holds a begonia flower. From an elephant tusk (*nāgadanta*) on either end hangs a jewelled necklace. In the east pillar of the Northern Gateway jewelled necklaces hang from elephant tusks (*nāgadanta*)<sup>89</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Barua, *loc. cit.*, III, Pl. XII, a motif is repeated in Pl. XIX, 14-15, XXXIII.

<sup>80</sup> Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchi*, London, n. d., Vol. III, Pl. LXXXII, 44a.

<sup>81</sup> Barua, *loc. cit.*, Pl. XIX, 14-15; XXXIII.

<sup>82</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Takṣa*, Part II, Pl. 47, 7.

<sup>83</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. 47, 7.

<sup>84</sup> Marshall, *Sāñchi*, III, Pl. XCVII.

<sup>85</sup> Philippe Stern and Mireille Bénéati, *Évolution du style Indien d' Amarāvati*, Paris, 1961, Pl. VI.

<sup>86</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. XX.

<sup>87</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. XLVIII, a.

<sup>88</sup> Marshall, *Sāñchi*, II, Pl. XXXVI, a & b.

<sup>89</sup> *Ib.*, II, Pl. XXXVII, a.



(Fig. 14). It is certain that in these scenes the elephant tusk was regarded as a *nidhi*.

In some of the decorative medallions in Stupa 2 at Sāñchī, the elephant tusk or horn is associated with the plant life (Fig. 18) particularly the lotus (*padma*) counted as one of the nine *nidhis*<sup>90</sup>. The medallion has a central lotus quartered with four horns or tusks (*nāgadanta*) from each of which hangs a flower or leaf of a lotus.

It is also significant to note that at Sāñchī the horn or tusk symbolizing fertility is employed in a purely Buddhist symbol of *triratna*. The *triratna* (Fig. 15) on the east pillar of the Northern Gateway represents three Buddhist jewels; the full wheel decorated with a lotus stands for *dharma*; the taurine surmounting it for the Master; and the *śrīvatsa* representing *saṃgha*. The voluted horn on each side which according to M. Foucher probably meant to consolidate the *triratna*<sup>91</sup> apparently represents *nidhīśrīṅga*. As a matter of fact there is nothing specifically Buddhist in the *triratna* symbol which is a combination of certain symbols descended from a common source, and which ultimately were closely connected with the idea of movement and fertility.

At Nāgārjunakoṇḍa *triratna* rests on a pedestal (Fig. 13) and is supported by a horn or tusk on either side.<sup>92</sup> Thus it is evident that even by the third century A.D. the symbolism of horn and tusk was fully realized.

It is also interesting to note that in the relief representing the dream of Māyādevī from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa the white elephant symbolizing Buddha is replaced by a pair of voluted tusks lying near the couch of the slumbering Māyā (Fig. 24). Here the symbolism is quite clear: the tusks symbolize fertility and procreation, and if Māyā, as it is believed, represents Māyā the Mother Goddess then her association with the tusks is understandable.

It may also be added here that the *śrīvatsa* symbol in early stages when it had not yet become a distinguishing mark of Viṣṇu was closely connected with the horn. The evolution of the symbol could be traced in the second century Jain sculptures from Mathura step by step. In the Āyāgapāṭa set up by Śihanādikā there are two tusks voluted at the ends facing each other (Fig. 16) with a fish in the centre<sup>93</sup> and secured together with a string. In another Āyāgapāṭa the horn of the *śrīvatsa* are s-shaped and the central fish losing its natural form takes the form of a simple lozenge.<sup>94</sup> In the third stage both the voluted tips are joined by a triangular projection.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Marshall, *Sāñchī*, Vol. III, Pls. LXXIV.26; LXXXVII, 69a.

<sup>91</sup> *Ib.*, Vol. II, Pl. XXIV, N. 9; on Eastern Gateway, Pl. XLIII.

<sup>92</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, M.A.S.I., No. 71, Delhi, 1953, Pl. XXXV, top of the chaitya slab.

<sup>93</sup> V. A. Smith, *The Jain Stūpa and other Antiquities of Mathurā*, Allahabad, 1901, Pl. VII; XXIX, 3.

<sup>94</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. VIII.

<sup>95</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. IX, X.



In early Indian iconography, however, the number of horned figures is limited. For the antiquity of horned gods, and goddesses holding a cornucopia, however, numismatic evidence is of interest as it supports the literary data. For instance, we have discussed above the evidence that at least one of the forms of Śiva was horned, but there is hardly any sculpture to support his association with horn. However, in one of the coins of Kanishka depicting Śiva, one of his secondary hands holds a mountain sheep whose horns still decorate the Muslim *Ziarats* and *Mazārs*.<sup>96</sup> In another type of Kanishka's coin bearing the name Bhavēsa the nimbate figure is horned, and in his four hands he holds a vase, a drum, a trident and a goat held by the horn.<sup>97</sup> In yet another coin of Kanishka, between Skanda and Kumāra stands a horned deity apparently Śiva.<sup>98</sup>

Some early Gupta coins<sup>99</sup> yield important information about the cornucopia. In the Standard type coin of Samudraguṭa the reverse is copied in its entirety from the later Kushāna Ardochso type. The goddess seated on a high backed throne holds a cornucopia in her left arm. Allan has traced the type to a seated figure of Abundantia on Roman solidi. In the Battle-axe type a few specimens show Ardochso holding the lotus instead of cornucopia. According to Allan, "the engravers interpreted the Ardochso of their model as Lakshmi, but it was sometime before they represented her with the characteristic attributes. When the last trace of the throne disappeared we have a regular Indian Lakshmi seated on a lotus, as she appeared at the creation (Padmavāsā, padmagrihā). Although Lakshmi might only suitably be represented with cornucopia, just as the Roman Abundantia, who is possibly the original of the Ardochso type, its significance was unintelligible to the Hindus . . . . . (Allan)."

Whatever opinion one may form about Allan's view on Ardochso and Abundantia forming the prototype of Lakshmi on Gupta coins there is little doubt that the indigenous Indian goddess Śrī-Lakshmi was associated with the Horn of Plenty. A fragmentary bone female figure from the Chaurāsi mound, Mathura (Fig. 19), which is datable to the first century B.C. is horned.<sup>100</sup> Its close stylistic and other affinities with the famous Pompeii ivory (Fig. 25) may identify her with Śrī, goddess of fertility, good fortune and abundance. The Pompeii figure is heavily ornamented, and her sex is emphasized. A very interesting feature of the hairdress is the horn which has a ring-shaped ornament at the base.<sup>101</sup> There could be hardly any doubt that the Horn of Abundance is meant here. It is not held by the goddess as in certain Gandhāra sculptures

<sup>96</sup> *A. S. I. Ann. Rep.*, 1913-14, p. 72; *Id.*, 1914-15, Part I, Pl. XVI, d.

<sup>97</sup> P. Gardner, *The Coins of the Greek and Scythian Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum*, London, 1884, p. 139.

<sup>98</sup> *Id.*, Pl. XVI.

<sup>99</sup> John Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties*, London, 1914, pp. lxx-lxxii.

<sup>100</sup> Moti Chandra, *Ancient Ivory*, Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum, No. 6, 1957-59, pp. 17-18, figs. 2 a, & 2 b.

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*, pp. 22 ff. fig. 1a.



and Gupta coins, but actually forms a part and parcel of her headdress or even meant to be growing out of her head.

A circular clay plaque found from the excavations at Avara in Madhya Pradesh, in the level belonging to the early historical period (c. 100 B.C. to 300 A.D.)<sup>102</sup> is of great interest for the study of the cult of Śrī and her relationship with the elephant tusk or horn. In this roundel (Fig. 17) the goddess with her nudity emphasized stands on an open lotus with her legs slightly flexed. Her right hand touches the ornament in the right ear and the left hand holds the fold of the garment, a characteristic pose in the iconography of Śrī as I have pointed out elsewhere.<sup>103</sup> She wears a necklace, bracelets and anklets. The beaded zone is four-stranded with a clasp in the centre. Her elaborate headdress is decorated with rosettes and pearl strands. She stands in between two tusks with inturned tips, and joined by their bases. Sheaves of corn and jewels are associated with the tusks. The most interesting part of the panel is a couple or Mithuna on either side of the goddess engaged in what appears to be sexual union. In the foreground on either end appears a pitcher which might have contained wine. The reverse is decorated with a rosetted circlet of guilloche and another circle decorated with dotted lozenges, apparently representing some ornament.

For the first time we are faced here with the developed form of Śrī cult which is treated with contempt in early Buddhist literature. In the *Milinda-prasna* (p. 191) her cult is counted as esoteric and in the *Brahmajāla Sūtra* her worship is proscribed. The ritual coitus in which her devotees indulge, and the presence of wine in the pitchers draw our attention to the sacred orgies of the later Tantras. As will be pointed out later on ivory was represented as cornucopia in Tibetan painting, and was connected with Vaiśravaṇa, and more specifically with Vasudhārā. The appearance of tusks as a *nidhī* in a plaque which could not be dated later than the 2nd century A.D. shows that the Śākta cult supposed to be comparatively of later origin goes back far in history.

That the cult of the horn as a symbol of fertility was fairly widespread in India is evident from a bronze horn (Figs. 20-23) the only one of its kind found accidentally by a farmer from the village Posheri, Wada Taluka, Thana District, Maharashtra State, in 1958 (Ht. 40.7 cm.). On stylistic grounds this horn could be dated to the early centuries of the Christian era. Its base is decorated with splayed lotus petals ridged in the middle round which runs a beaded band. This is followed by a band of inverted triangles contained by a second beaded border. A band of *fleur de lis* divided almost into two by a collar is contained by a third beaded border. A second band repeats the *fleur de lis* motif. The last band contains a heavily moustached mask with a smaller grinning mask (Fig. 23) on either side spouting a *fleur de lis* scroll. The rest of the horn is sharply ridged.

<sup>102</sup> H. V. Trivedi, *Excavations at Avara*, Journal of the Madhya Pradesh Itiḥāsa Parishad, No. 4, 1962, p. 25, Pl. IV.

<sup>103</sup> *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum*, No. 6, 1957-59, p. 21.



It is noteworthy that the horn has at least five man-made holes in good condition, while the others have closed or obliterated due to oxidization. It is possible that these holes were used for rivetting the horn to a wooden post in a temple either of Śiva or Devī.

One of the most interesting sculptures from the point of view of the horn motif is an image of Rishyaśṛṅga (frontispiece) in the Mathura Museum (J. 7). The figure is described by Dr. J. Ph. Vogel in the *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum* as "a male figure of fam-like appearance with elaborate turban, necklace of beads and other ornaments. He is standing under a mango tree in blossom with his right hand raised to his lips, and with his left placed against his thigh. He wears a sash round his waist and a curious necklace round his shoulders." Later on he identified it as the figure of a Yaksha and suggested the resemblance of its pose to Harposcrates from Taxila. V. S. Agrawala and B. S. Upadhyaya,<sup>104</sup> however, contend the identification and identified the figure with that of Rishyaśṛṅga whose story has been related earlier. The decisive factor in the identification is the short horn measuring 2 1/2" which projects itself against a leafy background emphasizing the rain-making propensity of the sage. The spiral at the base of the horn suggests that a black antelope's horn is intended here and therefore it is also suggestive of his legendary origin from a hind.

The artist of Mathura, however, seems to have followed not the Buddhist but the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* version of the story. In one of the pillar reliefs from Mathura<sup>105</sup> a part of the story is depicted (Fig. 26). In the top panel courtesans are proceeding in a boat to the hermitage of Rishyaśṛṅga; in the middle panel a courtesan is tempting the horned Rishi and in the bottom panel the innocent young Rishi is taken by the courtesan on her lap.

Among the recent acquisitions of the Prince of Wales Museum we have a horned terracotta head of the 2nd century A.D. from Kauśāmbī (Fig. 27). In some Gandhāra sculptures the female partner of the male god is shown holding the cornucopia. Harald Ingholt has reproduced a tutelary couple<sup>106</sup> from Sahrī Bahloī. The man is dressed in an Iranian calian and high boots. In his right hand he holds a sceptre and in the left a purse. His female partner holds in her left hand the cornucopia. They are identified as Farro and Ardochyo, though why they should not be Kubera and Lakshmi one fails to understand.

In the representation of Demeter-Hārītī from Sirkap, datable to the first century A.D. the goddess is seated on a throne clad in chiton and himation. She holds a cornucopia in her left hand. Harald Ingholt suggests that she may be a local version of Demeter or Hārītī.

J. Ph. Vogel draws our attention to the representation of Kubera and

<sup>104</sup> J. I. S. O. A., Vol. IV, pp. 62-64; V. S. Agrawala, *Handbook of the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology, Mathura*, Allahabad, 1939, p. 42, Pl. XVI, 23.

<sup>105</sup> The obverse of a Bhānushwara Rāling No. 151, Mathura Museum.

<sup>106</sup> Harald Ingholt, *Gandhara Art in Pakistan*, New York, 1957, pp. 147-148, fig. 345.



Hārītī on the pedestal of a broken standing image of Buddha in the Lahore Museum. He observes : "A very exceptional subject occurs on No. 353 of the Lahore Museum, where we find two sitting figures : that to the proper right is a male holding in his right hand a long staff or lance. His feet are placed on a footstool. The left figure is a female with a modius on the head and a cornucopia in the left hand. The one I take to represent Kubera or Vaiśravaṇa the god of wealth of whom we possess similar effigies in Gandhāra sculpture. The other is presumably a goddess of abundance and fertility, but whether her Indian name is Hārītī, Vasudhārā, Cārvā, Annapūrṇā or something else, I am unable to decide. The figure is of interest, as it is almost identical with the figure found on a coin of Azes which has been interpreted as Demeter."<sup>107</sup>

From Takht-i-Bahī was discovered the figure of a god and his consort identified by H. Hargreaves as Kubera and his consort (Fig. 28). They are seated in European fashion on a low throne. The female deity is seated to the proper left. The god holds a money bag in the left hand, is dressed in chiton and himation and wears buskins. His consort wears well draped garments. She holds a cornucopia in the left hand.<sup>108</sup> The striations indicate that the horn of a stag is meant here.

Cornucopia as a symbol of good luck, fortune and plenty also appears on a gold hoop ring. The bezel is oval enclosing a carnelian stone engraved with a cornucopia, a fluted vase and a spear.<sup>109</sup>

Apparently there are two differing views about the goddess holding a cornucopia in Gandhāran art—one identifying her with Demeter or Ardochšō and the other naturally identifies her with Hārītī. There is nothing unusual if a cornucopia is held by Hārītī, goddess of procreation and fertility. However, it is also significant that Śrī, goddess of wealth, abundance and prosperity is not only connected with Viṣṇu but also with Kubera, the god of wealth and material happiness and of all treasures as well. He was held to be an immanent king, and without doubt represents a fertility god, united with Riddhi, treasure, success, abundance and with Lakṣmī and Bhadrā, the happy, prosperous or fortunate one. He is also believed to be in the possession of Śrī or mature prosperity.<sup>110</sup> I am, therefore, of the view that the female consort of Kubera in Gandhāran art is Śrī or any of her forms and not Hārītī as suggested by some. The connection of the Kubera cult with the Horn of Plenty will be discussed later on.

The horn cult was fairly distributed in northern India and extended as far as Amarāvati and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in the south in the early centuries of the Christian era, and its memory was kept alive as late as the 7th century in the famous relief of the so-called "Arjuna's Penance" at Mahabalipuram.

<sup>107</sup> *A. S. I., Ann. Rep.*, 1903-04, p. 255, Pl. LXVIII, fig. 2.

<sup>108</sup> *A. S. I., Ann. Rep.*, 1910-11, pp. 37-38, Pl. XXII, b.

<sup>109</sup> *A. S. I., Ann. Rep.*, 1912-13, p. 27, Pl. XXI, b. 7.

<sup>110</sup> Gonda, *Aspects of Early Vissuism*, Utrecht, 1954, p. 195.



Dr. J. Ph. Vogel in his Archaeological notes on the Seven Pagoda (*ASI. Ann. Rep.* 1910-11) draws our attention to the group of ascetics, some carved in the round, engaged in the various occupation of the hermitage in front of a little shrine. Such a scene is usually laid on the banks of some sacred river. In this group the figure of an ascetic carrying the pitcher on his shoulder and his companion holding a cornucopia are particularly interesting (Fig. 30). The presence of the 'Horn of Plenty' next to the cleft is obviously meant to denote the productive powers of the stream that once flowed down the water channel.<sup>111</sup>

On one of the pillars in the Durgā temple at Aihole, a Mithuna couple with attendants and two horns are depicted in a roundel (Fig. 29).

In the mediaeval Indian sculpture, however, the Horn of Plenty had almost lost its meaning, though its symbolism continued in Tibet and Nepal. In this connection the iconography of Gaṇeśa and Kubera is important for the present study. Gaṇeśa is known in early Sanskrit literature as Ekadanta i.e., 'He of one Tusk', a term which continues the tradition of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*,<sup>112</sup> which speaks of the god Dantīn, 'The Tusked One.' The explanation of his being Ekadanta may be his connection with the harvest ceremonies. According to Gupte "It seems natural that the one tusk of the Harvest Lord, which gave him his ancient name, should symbolically stand for the most important implement of the harvest, the plough, especially as the word *ekadanta* may be translated : 'one tusk' or 'plough-share'.<sup>113</sup>

In some of the mediaeval iconographic texts and also sculpture Gaṇeśa is shown holding the tusk in one of his hands (Fig. 33). According to the *Prānatoshipi*<sup>114</sup>, Mahāgaṇapati is red coloured, the crescent moon rests on his forehead and on his left side is seated his consort Siddhi-Lakshmi. He holds a citron, mace, white lotus flower, the bow made of sugar cane, trident, discus, conchshell, blue lotus, an ear of the corn, his own tusk (*nijadantarātna*) and a bell. Another *dhyānamāntṛa*<sup>115</sup> again informs us that Gaṇapati held a horn (*nishāna*) in one of his hands. In the representations of Gaṇeśa both from the north<sup>116</sup> and south<sup>117</sup> he is shown holding his own tusk. In eastern India Gaṇeśa is represented as what is described carrying a radish<sup>118</sup> which is wrong. As observed by Getty : "As it is never carried by Gaṇeśa at the same time as the broken tusk, which is practically unknown in those three countries (Nepal, Tibet and Japan), it seems possible that the radish was primarily a misrepresentation of a badly executed broken tusk."<sup>119</sup>

<sup>111</sup> A. S. I., *Ann. Rep.*, 1924-25, p. 104, Pl. XXXIII, c.

<sup>112</sup> *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, X, 1. 5. सपुष्पाय विद्महे कक्रुवाय बीमहि तन्नोदन्तिः प्रनोदयात् quoted by Alice Getty, *Gaṇeśa*, Oxford, 1936, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> Alice Getty, *loc. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> *Prānatoshipi*, p. 596, ed. by Jivananda Vidyasagar; *Parashurāma Kalpasūtra*, II, 4.

<sup>115</sup> Haridas Mitra, *Gaṇapati*, Vishva Bharati Annals, Vol. VIII, pp. 60-62.

<sup>116</sup> Getty, *loc. cit.*, Pl. 4 a-b. The tusk is broken.

<sup>117</sup> *Ib.*, Pl. 5 a-b.

<sup>118</sup> N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca, 1929, Pl. LV, b.

<sup>119</sup> Getty, *loc. cit.*, p. 18.



It hardly needs any argument to prove that the tusk held by Gaṇapati represents the cornucopia as the god himself is the cause of the fulfilment of all earthly desires and bestows all the *nidhis* upon his worshippers.

In mediaeval iconographical texts the horn is also associated with Kārtikeya, Viśvarūpa and Trailokyamohana. One of the symbols carried by the six faced and twelve-handed Kārtikeya riding on a litter is a horn (*śrīṅga*)<sup>120</sup> which of course indicates the prowess of the War Lord and his intimate relationship with Śiva.

In the image of the four-faced and twenty armed Viśvarūpa-Viṣṇu his faces representing Nara, Narasimha, Śrīmukha and Varāha and attended by Garuḍa some interesting points may be noted. In some of the hands he holds the plough-share, conchshell, *bijapūra*, lotus and a horn (*śrīṅga*) which are the symbols of abundance, fertility and procreation.<sup>121</sup> In a *dhyānamantra* of Trailokyamohana in the *Rūpamaṇḍana* he is said to have sixteen hands which carry different symbols. In one of the left hands along with the conchshell and lotus flower which are well recognized *nidhis*, he carries also the Horn of Plenty.<sup>122</sup>

All these late references show that the purpose of the horn of plenty was still recognized, though its actual use was confined to the images of Gaṇapati only.

It would, however, perhaps be pertinent here to inquire the part played by Kubera, the Lord of Treasures, with whom the Horn of Plenty was associated in mediaeval times in preserving its symbolism. This problem has been studied by M. Lalou in one of his interesting papers<sup>123</sup> in which he has not only analysed the personality of Vaiśravaṇa or Kubera, but has also pointed out certain traits in this cult which though not apparent in India have been preserved in the art of Tibet and Central Asia.

Vaiśravaṇa or Kubera reveals various aspects in his personality which are due to the contacts he had with various cultures. Such was the popularity of the god that his cult got itself established not only in India but also in Tibet, Central Asia, China and Japan. He is not only the Lord of Treasures and a trusted friend of Śiva, but also in his secondary role acted as the chief of Yakshas, ruler of the Vidyādhara, one of the guardians of the world, protector of the Lord Buddha, god of the army and the spouse of Śrī and Vasudhārā. He also reveals traces of his androgynous nature. In the *Mahābhārata* (III. 258, 12 ff) he is the son of Pulastya from the cow Idaviḍa or Ilavila and therefore he is called Ailavila (*M.B.*, V. 102, 364). The legend recounts that one of the

<sup>120</sup> *Apoṇḍitaprichchā*, Ed. by P. A. Mankad, Baroda, 1950, p. 212, St. 70-72. The text is ascribed to the 12th century.

<sup>121</sup> *Apoṇḍitaprichchā*, p. 219, St. 26-32; *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 3, Sept. 1940, p. 536.

<sup>122</sup> *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, pp. 534-35.

<sup>123</sup> Marcelle Lalou, *Mythologie Indienne et peintures de haute-Asie. I. Le dieu bouddhique de la fortune*, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. IX, pp. 97-111.



daughters of Surabhi was Aṣṭavāra also known as Sarvakāmadugdhā, with whom Kubera is connected. If the identity of Surabhi and Aṣṭavāra is admitted then like Surabhi, the celestial cow of the epics, and Aṣṭavāra like the deified cow Aṣṭā also symbolizes abundance provided we agree that Aṣṭā and Aṣṭavāra are the same.

But the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* regard Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera as the son of Pulastya, the spiritual son of Brahmā, born from the cow Viśravā. As Pulastya was very much incensed by Vaiśravaṇa's behaviour at staying with his grandfather Brahmā he drew half of Viśravā within himself. In view of this story Viśravā is a form of Pulastya created as a counterblast to Vaiśravaṇa. But the story is difficult to understand. The chief interest of the legend lies in the fact that the Aṣṭavāra/Kubera was born from the cow Aṣṭavāra.

Kubera, inspite of his great popularity in the epics is, however, a new comer among the Vedic gods. The guardian of the north in the epics and Buddhist literature, he is also the protector of the east, because of his association with Indra, whom he sometimes replaces in the list of the Lokapālas.

It is significant that the geneology of Kubera has two branches; firstly he is the son of a cow, and himself represents the cow goddess, and secondly he is related to Brahmā through his father though in this legend as well his mother is a cow.<sup>124</sup>

The forms of Kubera confused by the hieratic formulas of Tantric Buddhism require careful analysis to reach their true meaning. However, here as well the Buddhist information have to be supplemented by the epics. For instance, his epithet as Brahma Kumāra in Tantric Buddhist literature, could not be explained without reference to the *Mahābhārata*, and his epithet Kumārī would only be explained by that source which unmistakably refers to his androgynous nature. Kubera's pre-eminent position in Buddhism to the exclusion of Indra, Varuṇa and Agni is due to his position as the god of fortune, who naturally commanded more followers among the peasants and merchants forming the bulk of the Buddhist laity.

In his capacity as the god of good fortune one is struck with certain analogues between Kubera and Gaṇeśa as pointed out earlier. M. Foucher has pointedly drawn our attention to this resemblance. To quote him, "Except for their faces, the two gods resemble each other like twin brothers; and to the worshipper passing to and fro, the one murmurs: 'May you be rich' while the other whispers in the ear: 'May you be successful in your enterprises'. What could be more reassuring to well to do people? Let us mention, by the way, that Gaṇeśa's rat, upon which the mythologists have built such far-fetched theories is simply the counterpart of the mongoose, symbolizes a well-lined purse, it is more than probable that the rat evokes the well-filled granary, where it is always an assiduous guest. Indeed we meet him again as busily

<sup>124</sup> Lalou, *loc. cit.*, pp. 101-102.



engaged near the bales of rice, on which the merry Dai Koku, the Mahākāla of the Japanese is crouching."<sup>125</sup>

This significant resemblance of Gaṇeśa and Kubera is carried a step further by M. Lalou who has established that the image of Kubera at least in Central Asia was connected with the elephant tusks—a characteristic feature of Gaṇeśa's iconography as pointed out earlier. In this connection M. Lalou has drawn our attention to two paintings in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale brought by Paul Pelliot, along with other documents from Tun-huang. These paintings representing Kubera show certain characteristics attributed to Gaṇeśa which show a stage in the cult in which Kubera and Gaṇeśa had not only the semblance of twin brothers, but the veritable confusion of forms.<sup>126</sup>

In the paintings cited above Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa is associated with the elephant tusk. It is significant to note that in Tibet elephant's tusk (lan-ch'en ch'en) is recognized as one of the seven royal badges.<sup>127</sup> M. Lalou has reproduced a number of drawings from Tibetan *tantras* to show the treasure consisting of a mass of jewels emerging from the elephant tusks.<sup>128</sup> This mass of jewels is at times associated with the mother of pearl and coral as well.<sup>129</sup> The tusks also figure in the basket of jewels placed before Vasudhārā the earth goddess, one of the forms of Śrī, the goddess of fortune, related to Kubera. They also appear in the basket of jewels placed before the Buddha, the guardian of Kubera and Jambhala (Fig. 32).

It seems that in Tibetan imagery ivory is considered as a jewel and placed on the same level as coral. But behind this belief lies the old Indian belief traceable from the epic days which regarded elephant tusk as a cornucopia, though strictly speaking ivory has not been included in the conventional lists of the *nidhis* or treasures except in the Jain *Pañṇavaṇā*.

In Pl. I of M. Lalou's article the aureole of Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa is represented by two elephant tusks (Fig. 31). In Pl. II at the feet of Vaiśravaṇa is seen in a suppliant attitude, an elephant-faced figure with three tusks. He is apparently one of the *gaṇas* submitting to Vaiśravaṇa. It is thus apparent that while in one painting the tusk, a symbol of richness, is carried by the deity himself, in the second painting it is associated with the deity, though he is a lesser divinity acting as an *Āyudhapuruṣa* of the principal deity. But the disassociation is not apparent, as this happens in a similar case (Pl. I) in which an acolyte (Fig. 31) holds the purse made of mongoose skin which should have been held by Kubera himself.

The iconographic evidence alone, however, is not sufficient to prove the

<sup>125</sup> Getty, *loc. cit.*, Introduction, pp. XXII-XXIII.

<sup>126</sup> Lalou, *loc. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>127</sup> L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet*, reprint, London, 1939, p. 391.

<sup>128</sup> Lalou, *loc. cit.*, figs. 5, 6, 8 f.

<sup>129</sup> *Ib.*, figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7.



identity of Kubera and Gaṇeśa; it has to be supported by the textual evidence as well. Gaṇeśa's reputation, though he is the god of harvest and litterateurs, solely depends on his status as a god of treasures. It is this aspect as the god of the riches, an appendage reserved for Kubera, that Gaṇeśa assumes in certain Buddhist rituals. For instance, the *Gaṇapatihrīdayahāriṇī*, found from the Tun-huang, prescribes a magical formula for the protection of the jewels, precious stones and hidden treasures. In another *Gaṇapatihrīdaya* ritual Gaṇeśa is called Jambha (tusk), reminding us of Jambhala, one of the names of Kubera. The magical ritual was performed carefully to obtain treasures from the genii who guarded them. The magic formula repeated endlessly also resulted in the discovery of the cache of jewels.<sup>130</sup>

The confusion between the personalities of Kubera and Gaṇeśa appears from certain rituals prescribed in a manuscript from Tun-huang, which contains a complete liturgy of the cult of Kubera: the invocation, the propitiation, the request and the eulogy of his grace. The Buddhist text names the officiating priest as Vidyādhara. The aims of the rituals are to obtain the treasures, to defeat the enemy and to transform the victuals into ambrosia and also to multiply them. The following three aspects of Kubera are emphasized: (1) as a god of fortune, (2) as a god of armies and (3) as a god of abundance. He is also called Śiva which is applicable more to Gaṇeśa than Kubera. The text also gives details of how the officiating priest invoked the god and when possessed by him danced and sang and the details of preparing the *maṇḍala*. It also gives a list of one hundred and eight names of the god. While invoking the Great King he is addressed: "Thou whose robust tusks protrude parallel to the tongue."<sup>131</sup>

Another curious text entitled the "Magical formula of Kubera to increase wealth" salutes Jambhala—Gaṇapati, that is to say a composite deity carrying the names of Kubera and Gaṇeśa.

The text quoted above deals with many aspects of Kubera but they are relegated to a secondary place in view of the precise information about his tusks which run parallel as in the case of an elephant.

From the data furnished above one is in a position to reconstruct the history of the cult of Kubera. Naturally he is the embodiment of abundance and good fortune. It is the latter trait in his character which places him in a predetermined region inhabited by the genii of the riches including Gaṇeśa and he became their chief. He is regarded as a Chakravartin and the monarch of Vidyādharas. Transported by Buddhist magic to the people who were already acquainted with the gods of fortune and the genii of the riches, his image synthesized the traits of the local gods. It was perhaps in this respect that he became adorned with the elephant tusk in a country where ivory was not only classed as a precious object but was regarded as a cornucopia and which

<sup>130</sup> Lalou, *loc. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

<sup>131</sup> *Ib.*, p. 109.



seems to have substituted the cow or bull horn used in the consecration ceremonies. This substitution of elephant by the bull occurs as late as the 15th century Jain miniatures. While lustrating the child Mahāvira seated in the lap of Indra the sky elephants are replaced by two bulls (Fig. 34) from whose horns flow the water. It seems, that in India the images of a bovine god and elephant god though separated are at times superimposed to represent the god of fortune. Inquiry into the cult images of Kubera takes us to a divinity whose distinguishing features are tusks. In most cases they follow the direction of the tongue.

## SOME MEDIAEVAL SCULPTURES FROM THE KONKAN

Moreshwar G. Dikshit

Very little is known about the sculptural traditions and artistic inheritance during the mediaeval period, as developing along the coastal regions of Maharashtra, popularly known as the Konkan.

There is no evidence, about the sculptural art of the Mauryans on the western coast. Such early sculpture, as can reasonably be dated to the early centuries before the Christian era, is almost restricted to portraits or figure sculptures, in the early caves at Nānāghāṭ, Bhājā and Kondāne. Standing on the highroads to the Deccan, on the fringe of the geological formation of the Deccan trap, they combine diverse forces which had not yet established themselves in the region. While the architectural traditions were not yet free from incorporating wooden material as an essential part of the building-complex as in the case of the Kondāne, Kārle and Bhājā caves, we have ample evidence in these and other Buddhist caves in the Deccan, that wood-work was actually initiated in stone-carving. Such sculptures as are associated with these types of excavations retain the static quality and almost a wooden appearance. The mutilated head of the Dvārapāla<sup>1</sup> to the left of the entrance to the *chaitya* at Kondāne bears witness to this. It is inscribed in the early Brahmi characters of about 2nd-3rd century B.C. and in this we really notice the earliest attempts at portrait sculpture in the coastal region of Maharashtra. The head is about three times the natural size, and even in its extant portion we notice remarkable regard to proportion.

Early portrait sculpture, similarly attempted at Nānāghāṭ<sup>2</sup>, the pass which leads from the Konkan to the high Deccan plateau, is now badly damaged. Withering action of the salty winds from the sea, neglect and perhaps vandalism, have played their part in their destruction. The label-inscriptions which are preserved alongside indicate that there was an attempt made to represent a Deva-Kula or portrait gallery at this place.

With the spread of Buddhism and the patronage accorded to it by the Śātavāhana rulers, the sculptural traditions in the Deccan may be said to have taken a definite shape. Several forces worked towards that end. Progressing along the ancient trade routes, the ancient art traditions found expression in various ways. In the early caves at Pitalkhorā, re-exhumed quite recently<sup>3</sup>, we find the characteristic Śuṅga influence working its way to the Deccan. It is particularly marked in the heavy coiffures of the ladies, heavy ornamentation

<sup>1</sup> J. Burgess, *The Buddhist Caves and their Inscriptions*, A.S.W.I., Vol. IV, London, 1883, p. 9, fig. 9.

<sup>2</sup> K. Gopalachari, *Early History of the Andhra Country*, Madras, 1941, Pl. II.

M. N. Deshpande, "The Rock-cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan", *Ancient India*, No. 15, 1959, pp. 66-93.



of the necks and legs<sup>4</sup> and Yaksha worship<sup>5</sup>. In other Buddhist centres like Kārle (*chaitya*), Bhājā (*vihāra*) and Kondāne, we are confronted with the 'Southern' traditions of the Kṛishṇa Valley, which are coupled with certain traits not essentially Indian in character. The juxtaposed lion-elephant and horse-riders on the pillar capitals at Kārle<sup>6</sup> or the figures of Scythian(?) warriors in the Bhājā *vihāra*<sup>7</sup>, which simulate identical figures from Nāgārjuna-konda<sup>8</sup> bear testimony to this. At Kārle the work is associated with donors from Dhenukākāṣṭha<sup>9</sup> and even Vaijyanti<sup>10</sup>. The portrait sculpture that we witness here, is in no small measure, inspired by artists of the Amarāvati school, which in turn was indebted to the Mathurā school of the Śuṅga period<sup>11</sup>. The high turbans and the drapery of the donors at Kārle bespeak of this. These figures, on either side of the entrance to the Kārle *chaitya*, were almost certainly inspired by similar figures at Kanheri<sup>12</sup>, on the west coast. The tapestry-like spread out of sculptured panels, inserted in between architectural scheme as at Bhājā<sup>13</sup> and the diaper-like repetitive motifs obtaining in the Śuṅga art, dominate the scene on the west coast also. Another convincing example of this is obtained in the caves at Nadsur, in a beautiful centre-piece on the ceiling of the main cave (No. VII) and the figure of Nāga Elāpatra carved on one of its walls.<sup>14</sup> Foreshortening of the legs, characteristic of the Bhārhut bas-relief, is also noticed in these caves. Besides, low-relief is not only preferred at Bhājā but also appears in the carvings at Nadsur and in a rock-cut *chaitya* on wall of the caves at Chaul<sup>15</sup>.

That the art traditions of the Sātavāhana period were essentially of the southern type is evinced by a large volume of terracotta figurines, both in local clays and in kaolin, found from Kondapur (Andhra State), Paithan, Kavsar (on the opposite bank of Godavari near Paithan), Ter, Bhokardan,<sup>16</sup> Nasik and Kolhapur. Unfortunately the links between the Sātavāhana period, both in the Deccan and in the Konkan remain disjointed for a considerable length of time till about the 7th-8th century A.D.

It is difficult to believe that the art traditions of the Sātavāhana period died out with the extinction of that dynasty from the Deccan; but the fact

<sup>4</sup> M. N. Deshpande, *loc. cit.*, Pls. LV, A; LXII, B and C; LXIII, A; LXI, A; LXIII, A.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Pls. LVI; LVII, A and C.

<sup>6</sup> Lalit Kālā, Nos. 3-4, April 1956-March 1957, Pl. II, fig. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ludwig Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, Vol. II, Paris, 1929, Pl. 63.

<sup>8</sup> A. H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakonda, Madras Presidency*, M.A.S.I., No. 54, Delhi, 1938, Pl. X; figs. c. & d.

<sup>9</sup> H. Hilders, *A List of Brahmi Inscriptions*, Calcutta, 1912, Nos. 1020, 1090, 1092, 1093, 1095, 1097 and 1121.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1087.

<sup>11</sup> J. Ph. Vogel, *Buddhist Art in India, Ceylon and Java*, Oxford, 1936, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, London, 1927, Pl. XXXI.

<sup>13</sup> Ludwig Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, Vol. II, Paris, 1929, Pl. 64, lower panel.

<sup>14</sup> H. Cousens, *An Account of the Caves at Nadsur and Karantakha*, A.S.W.I., Vol. 12, 1901, Plan of Cave VII.

<sup>15</sup> Not published but information based on personal observation.

<sup>16</sup> A detailed paper on these is under preparation by the author.



remains that we have no notable sculptures in this region which could vie with the classical sculpture of the Gupta period. Such little evidence as we have indicates in the gigantic Bhikṣhātana Buddha<sup>17</sup> in Kanheri Cave III, or the eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara<sup>18</sup> in Cave XIV, indicates the influence of Mathurā at its best.

With the change in the political circumstances, we are confronted with different traditions, which are mainly Rāshtrakūṭa in origin. A love for the magnitude of the human form, definitive ornamentation coupled with panelled exhibition, is apparent in sculptures at Elephanta, in the damaged sculpture in the Jogeshvari cave and in the large Śaivite figure from Parol. These represent the early Rāshtrakūṭa phase, which is limited to the region around Bombay — owing to the lack of proper exploration and the adverse climatic conditions of the coastal region. This early phase of Rāshtrakūṭa art is marked by definitive iconographic forms and proportion, even at the cost of beauty though emotion certainly seems to have been cared for.

With the extinction of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty, on the west coast the Śilāhāra and the Kadamba dynasties kept up the sculptural tradition alive. However, in the upper reaches of the Kōnkan hardly any example of the Śilāhāra art has survived. Except for the sculptures from the temple at Ambarnath<sup>19</sup>, some out-standing examples near the Chakrala tank at Sopārā,<sup>20</sup> and near the ruined temple at Gas<sup>21</sup> and stray notices of the sculptured panels from the cave at Lonad<sup>22</sup> near Kalyan, hardly any material seems to have been brought to light or has attracted the attention of scholars. Cousens' review of this material<sup>23</sup> suffers from the line-drawings which he has used to illustrate some sculptures, but these drawings hardly convey any artistic merits of the works they illustrate. The Deccan trap, which easily decays in a damp salty climate, must have been one of the reasons for the early deterioration of most of the material above referred to. However, where the sculptures have long lay buried and thus adequately protected, or those made of hard stone, have managed to retain their details and outlines. I believe that such sculptures in good condition could be made available after proper exploration. It is only after the material is made available that the art of the coastal region in the mediaeval period will be better understood and appreciated.

The discovery of three beautifully carved images recently discovered at Thana (Figs. 35, 36, 37), some sculptured panels from the temple at Parol,<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, London, 1962, Pl. 16.

<sup>18</sup> J. Fergusson and J. Burgess, *The Cave Temples of India*, London, 1880, Pl. LV, fig. 2.

<sup>19</sup> H. Cousens, *Mediaeval Temples of the Dakhan*, Calcutta, 1931, Pl. VI.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20, fig. 17.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XIV.

<sup>22</sup> R. V. Leyden, "The Buddhist Cave of Lonad", *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. XV, 1947, pp. 84-88, Pls. VII & VIII; J. Burgess, *Report on the Elura Cave Temples and Brahmanical and Jaina Caves in Western India*, A.S.W.I., Vol. V, London, 1883, pp. 52-54, Pl. XLV.

<sup>23</sup> H. Cousens, *loc. cit.*, pp. 13-22.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XIII.



near Bassein, and the isolated sculptures from Dive-Agar, Bivli (Fig. 38) and Chiplun (Figs. 39, 40) (all in the Ratnagiri District) should be a revelation to the students of art as they provide a link in the continuity of tradition in the Konkan. All of these come from the territory governed by the Śilāhāra rulers of Thana and on stylistic ground are roughly datable to *circa* 1000-1200 A.D.

### (A) Three Mediaeval Images from Thana :

These three images now in the Prince of Wales Museum, illustrated here through the courtesy of the Director of Archives and Archaeology, Government of Maharashtra, Bombay, were accidentally discovered in October 1964, while clearing a stable in the Jondhall Baug area on the Bombay-Agra road at Thana. All the three images were intended for a Brahmanical temple, which for some reason or the other was never finished, and the efforts to locate the site of this temple have not been fruitful.

One of the images from Thana represents the standing image of Vishṇu as Śrīdhara<sup>25</sup> (Fig. 35) measuring 125 cm. Śrīdhara stands in *sambhanga* pose, and holds *akṣhamālā*, *chakra*, *gadā* and *śankha* as his attributes with a smile playing on his face. He wears *kaṇḍamukuta*, and a torque from which *śankha* and mango-shaped pendants are hanging. Below the torque he wears a *gopha* and a chain formed by large links. From his right shoulder hangs the *yajñopavīta* of three strands with a *Brahma-granthi* in front, and a *champakā* garland worn like an *upavīta*. He wears a zone and folds of his lower garment hang in graceful folds over his loins. He has anklets rising on his ankles, as may be observed in mediaeval sculptures. The halo is decorated with large lotus petals.

On the right and the left of Śrīdhara are represented the donor and his wife, the former with folded hands and the latter holding a cup full of *modakas* or sweetmeat balls. In front of these donors appear two dwarfs; the one on the proper left holds a circular tamburine-like musical instrument (or may be a round shield) whereas the *gana* on the right holds a conchshell. The image stands on a *pañcharatha* pedestal, over which two miniature shrines rise above the moulded pilasters. In the niches of the *deutikās*, some figures were intended to be carved but these were never finished. It was the intention of the artist to decorate the sides of the pilasters with *cyālaka*-brackets, only one of which on the proper right was completed. Bolstered portions intended for the second *vyālaka* on the left show that the image was unfinished, a feature also indicated by a large mass of tapering stone left unworked behind the halo.

The second image of Mahīśāsūramardīnī (Fig. 36) is 58 cm. high and represents the goddess in the act of killing the demon Mahīśāsura. Her right leg rests on the Buffalo Demon with the severed head out of which the demon has sprung up. The goddess wears *kirīṭamukuta*, an *ekāvalī*, a torque, a broad fillet and a necklace which dangles in graceful folds over her breasts. Her

<sup>25</sup> *Aparājita-prichhā of Bhuvanadeva*, ed. by P. A. Mankad, G. O. S. No. CIXV, Baroda, 1950, p. 553. पद्मराज्ञे चक्रगदे केशवे बासुदेवके, 217, 16a.



breast-scarf covers half of her breasts and is tied with a knot in the middle. Her zone is adorned with tiny bells (*kshudraghaṅḡikā*) and her broad waist-band has a number of looped strings of pearls. She wears armlets and bracelets and two anklets on either foot. She is four-armed; her lower right hand is shown piercing the body of the demon with a trident while the upper right is shown brandishing a sword (*khaṭvāṅga*). The Buffalo Demon killed by the goddess is shown with his head severed and is kneeling before her in supplication. He wears a *ghaṇṭāmālā*. To add to the humour of the scene, lion-*vāhana* of the goddess, is shown biting the Buffalo from the back.

The demon springing from the Buffalo is shown in human form and is shown trying to parry the thrust of the trident with his left hand. The agonized expression on the face with round open eyes is faithfully recorded. There is an innate joy marked on the face of the goddess, arising from the triumph over the demon.

The modelling of the figure has some notable qualities. The long pole of the trident balances the *tribhaṅga* pose of the deity and almost divides the figure in the fierce and meditative aspects. The top heavy limbs of the deity are balanced by the careful placing of the two animals and the demon.

The third figure is that of Gaṇeśa (Fig. 37) almost 54.5 cm. in height and is remarkable for its splendid modelling. The elephant-headed god made of the Deccan trap is shown with one-tusk (*ekadanta*) only; he is represented in the act of eating *modakas* from a bowl held in the lower left hand. He wears a flat *karaṇḍamukuta*, has a serpent as his *upavīta*. His lower right hand holds a pen (*lekhaṇī*) shown in the act of writing. The upper hands are mutilated. He is seated on a cushion decorated with hollow 'cross' design, common in mediaeval sculptures. His *vāhana*, the mouse, is shown in front, nibbling the edge of his seat.

Some of the sculptures from the Konkan, discussed below, preserve their artistic qualities on account of their material. The stone used for them is soft chlorite schist, which is easy to carve when fresh from the mines, but hardens to a certain extent when exposed to the air. This stone is not locally available anywhere in the Konkan, where a shady reef like knotty, violet-vermilion-coloured stone, locally called the *jambhu* stone is generally found and is unsuitable for any detailed carving. It has to be presumed therefore that the chlorite schist images were either brought to the Konkan from outside (at least in so far as the raw material is concerned) and were probably the work of the artisans from outside the Konkan.

#### (B) Vishnu image from Bivli :

In this respect the chlorite image from Bivli is noteworthy. This image (Fig. 38) is now in worship in a small village called Bivli, about 22 miles to the

<sup>24</sup> *Aparijitaprichchhā of Bhuvanadeva*, ed. by P. A. Mankad, G. O. S. No. CXV, Baroda, 1950 p. 554. पद्म चक्रं गदा शङ्खं श्रीधरे श्रीनिकेतने, 217, 218.



west of Chiplun. The village nestles on the high table-land on the mountain ridge and is popularly known by the joint name Ketki-Bivli, the former village being about a few furlongs from the latter.

This image measuring 137 cm. length represents the *Keśava*<sup>26</sup> aspect of Vishnu. He wears a high *karandamukuta* and elaborately carved *makarakūṇḍalas*. He stands in *sambhāṅga* pose holding in his lower left hand a lotus flower, whose petals are so spread as to resemble a small female figure, taken to be that of Lakshmi by the villagers. For this reason the temple enshrining this deity is known as that of Lakshmi-Keśava. The figure holds a conchshell embellished with a long handle in many beaded segments in the upper left hand. The *chakra* in the upper right hand is similarly provided with a twisted handle and the *gada* (mace) in his lower right hand is fluted and beaded. The bulge of the mace occupies the middle section, and not the apex, as is usually seen with this weapon. The figure wears bracelets in all its four hands a long necklace and a necklet reaching the navel, *yajñopavīta* and other neck, ornaments, a zone and anklets. There is a round *prabhāvali*, behind the face.

Garuda, with folded hands, is shown seated in *ardhaparyāṅka* pose on the pedestal to the right of the main image, and behind Garuda appears a standing female figure, with her hair collected in a bun. She holds a small round object in her right hand, possibly a ball.

On the right hand side of the pedestal, a royal figure, possibly the donor, is shown standing with a *pāśa*-like object in his left hand; behind him stands a female *chauri*-bearer.

Considerable portion above these figures is left blank. The back portion of the image is shaped like a *torana*, resting on two pilasters. At the top is shown a *kīrtimukha* with a scroll issuing from its nostrils. The scrolls show small images inset and were intended to represent the different *avatāras* of Vishnu. Of these the Matsya, Kachchha *avatāras* are seen to the proper right of the main figure, Varāha and Narasiṅha in the top scroll; the figure of the Buddha appears on the left hand side.

### (C) Image of Kesava at Dive-Agar :

Another outstanding image of Keśava from the Konkan, is known from the village Dive-Agar. This village, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from Borlai Panchetan, 5 miles south of Śrīvardhan, on the sea coast is already known to scholars on account of the discovery of seven copper plates, three of them assigned to the Śilāhāra period. The village shows traces of many antiquarian remains, such as the presence of a very large tank, and loose sculptures etc., which have not been properly surveyed.

The present image which is reported to have been discovered while ploughing about 75 years ago, is a remarkable piece of sculpture, made of green chlorite schist noted for its beauty and elegance of form. It represents the Keśava aspect of Vishnu. He wears a *karandamukuta* and the usual ornaments



around the neck as in the Bivli figure, referred to above but the ornaments excel in quality here. *Vaijayantimālā*, *mekhalā* and other ornaments are shown in careful details. His lower right hand hangs down in the lotus-holding pose. It seems that at the time of the daily worship it was intended that Kēśava should hold a fresh lotus flower every day. His upper left and right hands are shown holding the conchshell and discus respectively, whereas the lower left hand holds a mace which is touching the floor. The mace-head assumes a tapering form and does not have any bulge as at Bivli.

At the base of the pedestal is shown the figure of Garuḍa with folded hands; behind him stands a male attendant holding an axe. To the left stands a female figure holding the *chāmara* and behind her is the figure of a *gana* holding the staff.

The back portion of the *prabhāvali* is decorated with the figures of the ten *avatāras* of Viṣṇu. Out of these Matsya and the Kūrma forms are shown near the figure of Garuḍa on the pedestal; Narasimha, shown in the act of tearing the belly of Hiraṇyakaśipu, appears at the top. For the delineation of these *avatāra-mūrtis*, scroll work has been used which in turn frames these small images. The *avatāra-paṭṭa* shows a *gana* with garlands, and the figure of the Buddha appears on the left hand side.

This sculpture on grounds of its highly artistic style and the minute decoration could be assigned to the Śilāhāra period.

#### (D) **Vindhyavasini image at Chiplun :**

Another interesting piece of sculpture which deserves notice in this survey is the Vindhyavāsini image from (Fig. 41) the cave temple dedicated to her. This shrine is mentioned in the *Vāḍeśvara-udaya Mahākāya* recently edited by Dr. A. D. Pusalkar.

About a mile to the south of the village of Chiplun there is a small hill. A small cave intended for the shrine is carved about the middle of its slope, and enshrines a small cult image of Mahishāsūramardini on a recently erected pedestal.

The image about 46 cm. high is in green chlorite schist and shows the Devī in the act of killing the demon Mahishāsura. There is nothing very noteworthy about its iconography, but from the artistic point of view it is a remarkable creation. The image shows the Hoysala influence in the highly ornate details, the squat face and above all, the exuberance of details.

#### (E) **Sculpture of Karttikeya at Chiplun :**

The Vindhyavāsini Cave at Chiplun contains another important sculpture of Kārttikeya (Figs. 39, 40) which is a unique specimen of mediaeval art. This figure has six heads and is shown standing in the *śamabhaṅga* pose. It is about 71 cm. in height. The image shows the God standing with his *vāhana*, the peacock, on the left hand side of the pedestal and a *chauri*-bearer to the



right. In the hands of the figure which is very heavily ornamented, the weapons like the arrow and the handles of the *gada* and *paraśu* are clearly seen. On the left hand side he is shown holding a bow and lotus bud. The other hands are mutilated. All the heads are shown with high *kiritamukūṭas* and profusion of jewellery, both round the neck as well as the zone. The *mekhalā* is ornamented with a *kirtimukha*. The figure is a remarkable piece of the art of Śilāhāra period.

(F) **Siva image near Alibag :**

Reference should be made here to a very fine sculptured panel representing the dancing Śiva (Fig. 42) from a ruined temple near Alibag, District Kolaba. It was found by Sri P. G. Chinmulgund, I.C.S., then Collector at Kolaba and presented to the Raja Kelkar Museum, Poona. The image, about 71 cm. high and 76 cm. broad, represents Śiva in a dancing pose, in between two pilasters, flanked by *vyālakas* and *gajāśṛṅgālas*. He is covering himself with the hide of the elephant demon Andhakāśura. His right leg is awkwardly bent. The image has eight hands of which the upper two hold the hide; the second proper right hand holds the *damru* and the lowermost one is in the *abhaya* pose. The proper left hand holds a skull while the upper two clutch the hide and the pilaster respectively. The trident or some other weapon in the remaining hand is sadly mutilated. A female attendant is shown standing at the base; in the left corner appears the head of the slaughtered elephant-headed Andhaka.

The image is in black Deccan trap and is in a good state of preservation.

(G) **Sculptured panel at Parol, near Bassein, Dist. Thana :**

The village of Parol boasts of an elegant Śiva temple which unfortunately is in ruins and has already been referred to by Cousins in *Mediaeval Temples of the Dakhan*, Pl. XIII. A number of panels are lying in the vicinity near the ruins and have suffered much damage at the hands of the vandals. I have selected two panels. One of them shows five *ganas* holding weapons. Their legs are bent. The delineation of the faces is clumsy and stereotyped, but a certain element of repetitive motif is pleasing. The second panel, also from the same Śiva temple, shows the part of the decoration on the walls of the temple. It consists of five compartments devoted to Śaivite figures. The first one from the proper left shows a *gana* of Śiva. The second one, a female figure, is the familiar motif of Rūpadarśinī i.e., lady at toilet looking in a mirror. The central compartment shows a warrior, with his javelin, thrust into the body of a child held on the right arm. The fourth compartment shows a nude female figure combing her hair after the bath. To add a touch of humour, a monkey is shown to her right drinking the water dripping from her hair. The fifth shows a six-armed warrior (*gana*) in the *tāṇḍava* pose, with his upper left arm in the act of brandishing a sword.

The panel is indicative of the artistic tradition imbibed by the Konkan artists and shows how certain motifs were common in the mediaeval Indian

art. The motif of Rūpadarśinī and "The Lady combing the Hair" are wellknown motifs which start at Mathurā school of the Kushāṇa period, and continue in Central India (at Khajuraho), in Orissa (at the Rāja-Rāñī and other temples), though their counterparts in mediaeval sculpture in the Deccan are comparatively fewer.



## A CHOĻA BRONZE OF A DANCING CHILD—A PROBLEM IN IDENTIFICATION

K. Bharatha Iyer

The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay has a remarkable ChoĻa bronze figure of a dancing child which has been identified as 'Dancing Bālakṛishṇa' and ascribed to the 12th century A.D. This bronze does not appear to have been studied though it has been published in Sivaramamurti's *South Indian Bronzes* wherein it is reproduced as Fig. 83a<sup>1</sup>, and described as 'Bālakṛishṇa' and dated 12-13th century. While its merits as a ChoĻa bronze in the best tradition deserve attention as will be evident from the sumptuous illustrations herein (Figs. 43 to 46) its identification as 'Dancing Bālakṛishṇa' has been questioned in view of the existence of several similar dancing child figures which though they lack in distinguishing iconographical traits are yet differently labelled as 'Dancing Bālasubrahmaṇya' and 'Dancing Tīrujñānasambandar'.

The Prince of Wales Museum figure was obtained from a local dealer and its previous history as to location, association etc. is not known. It is 60.5 cm. high including the pedestal. This figure is caught in an impressive pose in the course of a spirited dance which admirably displays the body and limbs in all their expansive grace and dynamism. The figure rests on a double lotus pedestal, exquisitely poised on the left leg which is bent at the knee, while the raised right leg (also bent) has the foot pointing downwards. The lower limbs thus almost form a parallelogram. The bent right hand with the forefinger pointing upwards (*sūchi-mudrā*) is in the reverse direction of the bent right leg; they are like two inverted triangles with upward and downward pulls. On the left the extended hand registers a farflung movement in contrast to the tensions established on the right. The body and the limbs are smooth and the flesh tender. The convex and concave curves of the legs and the fluid grace of the muscles particularly noticeable around the navel are sensitively realized. The figure is tastefully and winsomely ornamented with a graceful *mukūṭa*, *paṭrakūṇḍalas*, necklaces, *keyūras*, armlets, waist-bands and anklets. The thread that hangs from the lowest necklace divides into three parts and then passes over the back (Fig. 44) making a delightful decorative pattern. No distinctive sign like *śrīvatsa* mark is seen on this image. The *mukūṭa* recalls to mind the *kirita* of the Pallava Viṣṇu figures (see figs. 10a, 10b and 10c of Sivaramamurti's *South Indian Bronzes*) all ascribed to the 8-9th century and the headgear of the Konerirājapuram Pārvaṭī<sup>2</sup> ascribed to the latter half of the 10th century. The pleasing pattern of the *śiraśchakra* (Fig. 44) of ChoĻa ancestry may also be noticed. On the whole, it appears to partake of the inspiration and clan of the early ChoĻa period and is possibly earlier than

<sup>1</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Bronzes*, Lalit-Kalā Akademi, New Delhi, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas Barrett, *Early ChoĻa Bronzes*, B. Desai Institute, Bombay, 1964, Pl. 4.



12th-13th century. The Musée Guimet has a similar figure also described as 'Dancing Kṛishṇa' but it is poised on the right leg and the palm of the hand with *sūchi-mudrā* is turned inward. Other Museums have also similar figures identically labelled while images like the Arayankuḍi figure in the Madras Museum<sup>3</sup> and the one in Sir Cowasji Jehangir's Collection<sup>4</sup> are identified as Bālasubrahmanya and Tirujñānasambandar respectively. Therefore the problem of identification of similar figures, unless associations are clearly known, becomes difficult and confusing. This is an instance where iconography as such offers little help, for what is represented is merely a dancing child. As the question of identification is a matter of some importance several scholars were consulted and their views are summarised and discussed below.

P. R. Srinivasan thinks that this figure could be Bālasubrahmanya as well as Bālakṛishṇa and opines that these are the two common identifications of this type of figures but that a correct identification is possible only when its associations are known. He also says, "Some people say that this type of image represents Sambandar dancing; but it is doubtful". S. Nagaswamy is of the opinion that apart from Skanda in the Somāskanda group wherein he is generally shown as a little child standing between Śiva and Pārvatī and holding a flower, there seems to be no sanction for representing Subrahmanya as a dancing child and that he is not aware of a dancing Bālasubrahmanya under worship. He adds that there are a number of Śaiva temples where such dancing images are identified as Tirujñānasambandar (Figs. 47 & 48). He further states, "If a similar dancing figure is found alone and not with a Somāskanda group and its height is more than one foot and if it is found in a Śaiva temple or in association with a Śaivite bronzes it would be proper to identify the image as Nartana Sambandar. I have enquired of some of the traditional *Śhapatis* and they confirm my view. However, I have not been able to get any reference in *Silpa* texts to Nartana (dancing) Sambandar so far." He also points out that Kṛishṇa is not always represented with *śrīvatsa*. K. V. Soundararajan says that there are rigid canons which specify the features of Bālasambandar. "The similarity of any such dancing figure very close to that of Kālīyānartana Kṛishṇa is also striking and hence one is apt sometimes to call such figures 'dancing Bālakṛishṇa'. Even Bālakṛishṇa can hold a cup although he normally carries a butter ball. The hand in *sūchi-hastha* can again either directly relate the figure to the dancing Kṛishṇa or signify pointing to the divine mother who suckled him (Tirujñānasambandar)."<sup>5</sup> He further

<sup>3</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Bronzes*, Lalit-Kalā Akademi, Delhi, 1963, fig. 79b.

<sup>4</sup> K. Khandalavala and Moti Chandra *Miniatures and Sculptures from the Collection of the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Part I*, Bombay, 1965, fig. 14.

<sup>5</sup> The story runs that one day the father of child Sambandar left him on the bank of the tank and went down for his bath and ablutions. After a while the child not seeing the father who was having his dip in the water began to cry. Then Śiva and Pārvatī appeared before him and Pārvatī gave her own milk in a cup of gold which the child drank with relish and quieted down. When the father came up he saw traces of milk on the lips of Sambandar and asked him who fed him with milk. Sambandar pointed out with his forefinger (*tarjani-mudrā*) to Śiva and Pārvatī who were high up in the sky. The *Saundaryalaharī* of Śaṅkarācārya (9th cent.) also contains a reference to the Draviḍa child fed by Pārvatī with her own milk. Probably the reference applies to Sambandar.



opines that the development may possibly be mediaeval and had forms both in conventional stance without any cup or other article. Shri P. Z. Pattabiraman who questioned the correctness of the identification of this bronze on his visit to the Prince of Wales Museum and said that it represents the 'Dancing Tirujñānasambandar' has adduced further evidence in support of his view. To an enquiry as to whether dancing is associated with Sambandar he says that according to the *Periya Purāṇam*<sup>6</sup> that after pointing out to his parents, Śiva and Pārvaṭī up in the sky Sambandar began to dance and chant hymns in honour of Lord Śiva. He has also kindly supplied photographs of similar dancing child figures (Figs. 47 & 48) found in certain Śaiva temples. This would appear to be conclusive evidence that such figures found in Śaiva temples can be regarded as Sambandar but does not invalidate the identification of the Prince of Wales Museum figure and other similar images whose Śaivite association is not proved. The question now is, what brought about this strange phenomenon of dancing child figures, all alike, and then variously identified?

An examination of the various Sambandar figures reveal, that no specific or rational canonical prescription was followed. Sambandar was a contemporary of the Pallava king Mahendravarman and lived in the 7th century A.D. Though no contemporary portrait of him is available the earliest representations known depict him as a simple commoner type of a boy as is widely known from the frequent reproduction of the Boston Museum figure<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 49) and the Śivapuram Sambandar (Fig. 125 of P. R. Srinivasan's *Bronzes of South India*) which is ascribed to the beginning of 11th century A.D. These two figures carry a cup of milk in the hand and the right forefinger is pointing to Śiva and Pārvaṭī. Three other figures reproduced in Srinivasan's *Bronzes of South India* (Figs. 264, 306 and 309) all bear the cup and none is in a dancing pose.<sup>8</sup> Whatever that be, a noticeable change occurred in which a simple *sātvik*, Brahmin boy was turned gradually into a *deva*-like prince as a result of the process of deification that ensued. Sambandar figures became enhanced by the addition of *mukūṭas* and various choice ornaments more befitting a *rājasic* type. Not an unusual phenomenon when we remember the similar transformation that occurred in the Buddha figures. In some Sambandar images a crown<sup>9</sup> is added and in some others several ornaments<sup>10</sup> and then in some other figures the dancing pose too is added. Thus, it looks very much like an approximation to an earlier existing type viz. that of the dancing Bālakrishṇa. Bālakrishṇa had long remained the most winsome child, decked

<sup>6</sup> Nallaswamy Pillai, *Sekilar's Periya Purāṇam*, Madras 1915, p. 166. But this work it should be noted in this context was written in the 12th century i.e. nearly five hundred years after Sambandar, when the process of his deification had been almost completed and legends had grown around him.

<sup>7</sup> The Boston Museum figure does not appear to be so late as 14th cent. This could usefully be compared with Fig. 125 of Srinivasan's *Bronzes of South India* (Madras, 1963) which hails from Śivapuram and is ascribed to early 11th century A.D.

<sup>8</sup> The consistency of the simple ascetic type is borne out by such figures as the Colombo Museum bronze of 11th century A.D. reproduced as fig. 56 in Sivaramamurti's *South Indian Bronzes*.

<sup>9</sup> P. R. Srinivasan, *Bronzes of South India*, Madras, 1963, fig. 264.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, figs. 306 and 309.

with choice jewels, fond of dancing and given up to pretty pranks, the cynosure of all eyes and ravisher of all hearts. The winsome, dancing child, Bālakṛiṣṇa becomes a type, a cliché, and the development of the 'dancing Subrahmanya' and 'dancing Sambandar' appear to be a later development. Bālakṛiṣṇa being so closely associated with dancing is featured in more than one way; as dancing Kāliyākṛiṣṇa, as dancing with a ball of butter or as simply dancing. "When dancing his (Bālakṛiṣṇa's) hands are empty, the right in the *abhaya*, *tarjani* or other pose, and the left arm extended outwards, and his hair is fastened in a more or less cylindrical *keśabandha*."<sup>11</sup> And Gopinath Rao says<sup>12</sup> "when the ball of butter in the hand is not shown, it has to be understood that the dancing and the joy are due to the certain expectation of getting the butter." In this figure the dance appears to be reaching its conclusive phase as the expectation is soon to be realized as the *śukhi* hand indicates. Thus, it would appear that the figure under discussion needs no change in its present identification.

<sup>11</sup> Gravelly and Ramachandran, *Catalogue of South Indian Hindu Metal Images in the Madras Government Museum*, Bulletin of the Madras Govt. Museum, New Series, General Section, Vol. 1, pt. 2, Madras, 1932, p. 83.

<sup>12</sup> T. A. Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. 1., pt. 1, Madras, 1914, p. 206.



## JAINA BRONZES IN HARIDAS SWALI'S COLLECTION

Umakant P. Shah

In the collection of Shri Haridas Swali, Bombay, are two beautiful Jaina bronzes deserving special study. The first, Fig. 50 (front), Fig. 51 (inscription on the reverse) is a south Indian Jaina bronze (size: height 34.3 cm.; width 22.9 cm.) representing Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra sitting in *ardha-padmasana* on an inverted lotus and resting against the *prabhā* with a horizontal bar with *makara* terminals, supported by two dwarf pillars. On the outer sides of the pillars two stylized rampant lions support the *makara* terminals of the horizontal cross-bar. From this cross-bar, springs on each side, a standing fly-whisk-bearer (*Chāmaradhara Yaksha*), wearing ornaments, crown etc. The entire central group is enclosed in a shrine symbolically represented by two bigger pillars supporting a horizontal bar, on which rests the *vimāna* or the three tiered superstructure; the upper and the central tiers are decorated with *chaitya* window or *kuṇḍu* motif. The upper tier seems to suggest that this shrine possibly had an oblong superstructure of the *gaja-prishṭha* shape. The *śikhara* is surmounted by a *maṅgalakalasa*. On the top of each of the two bigger pillars rests a divine *mālādharā* or garland-bearer. The left end of the superstructure supports the figure of a Tirthaṅkara with a canopy of seven snakehoods probably Pārśvanātha. There must have been a corresponding figure of another Tirthaṅkara (perhaps Ādinātha) on the right end.

The *pīṭha* has in the lowermost section a *dharmachakra* in the centre (now partly visible, being mutilated). The upper portion of the *pīṭha* shows the *śimhāsana* of the Jina, with a lion on either end. The lion in the centre represents the *lāñchana* of Mahāvīra.

On the right end projection of the *pīṭha* is a two-armed, pot-bellied Yaksha, carrying a purse in the left hand; on the corresponding left end projection is shown Ambikā, holding her child with the right hand and a mango in the left. This pair of the Yaksha and the Yakshī was a common feature to all the Tirthaṅkaras before separate Yakshas and Yakshīs for each of the twenty-four Tirthaṅkaras were prescribed. At Ellora, for example, we find the earlier pair, and not the later Yakshas and Yakshīs. Even though the twenty-four Yaksha and Yakshī pairs, a pair for each Tirthaṅkara, were prescribed sometime before the 11th century; in art they seem to have become popular only after the 11th century.

The figures of Mahāvīra, *chāmaradharas* and the Yaksha pair are beautifully modelled and suggest late 9th century date for this bronze. The rendering of the face and the eyes of Mahāvīra could be compared with



the rendering of similar features in the bronzes from Rajnapur Khinkhini, now preserved in the Nagpur Museum. The superstructure suggests that the bronze hails from further south, probably from the Karnāṭaka region.

This bronze could be compared with another bronze, now in the Madras Museum. It is (Fig. 52) slightly later in date than the bronze in Swali collection as the modelling and finishing are less refined than in the Swali bronze. In the Madras Museum bronze, the composition is simplified and the two smaller Tirthaṅkaras as well as the flying garland-bearers are omitted. The Madras Museum bronze is possibly an early Chōḷa piece assignable to the 10th century.

Figure 53 (front) illustrates a larger bronze in the Swali collection (height 50 cm.; width 30 cm.). It is also a Digambara bronze as the standing Tirthaṅkaras are nude.

This bronze is a Pañcha-tirthika image (that is, representing the five Tirthaṅkaras) with Rishabhanātha sitting in the centre, in *padmāsana*, his hands in *dhyānamudrā* with a Tirthaṅkara standing on either side in the *kāyotsarga* pose. These three figures are within the frame of two pillars supporting a horizontal crossbar, on the top of which appears a Jina in *padmāsana* on either end. Between these two Jinās is an elaborate lotus-halo, at the lower end of which appear two flying divine garland-bearers and two musicians playing flutes. The triple umbrella tops the bronze. A dwarfish figure possibly representing a heavenly drummer serves as a finial.

The pedestal has two lions facing in opposite direction and in between them appears the *dharmachakra*. On the right end of the pedestal is seated a Kubera-like Yaksha and on the left end appears the four-armed Yakshi Chakreśvari on her eagle mount.

Below the *dharmachakra*, in the centre of the pedestal, appears the crude figure of an animal which should have been the bull, but does not look like it. By the side of the Yaksha is a small elephant which is possibly the cognizance of the Tirthaṅkara Ajitanātha standing on the right. On the corresponding left appears the figure of a tortoise, which is the cognizance of Śāntinātha. The central figure represents Ādinātha or Rishabhanātha recognized on account of the hair-locks falling on his shoulders and the appearance of Yakshi Chakreśvari. On either end of the pedestal appears a male fly-whisk bearer.

The bronze shows some uncommon features adopted by the artist without violating the canonical rules. Firstly, the attendant *chāmaradhara* Yakshas are placed on a lower level, instead of being on the right and left sides of the central Tirthaṅkaras. This device has resulted in the shifting of the positions of the attendant Yakshas and Yakshīs. The lotus-halo between the two smaller sitting Jinās has no significance and has been introduced only either as a space filler or as the temple ceiling.

<sup>1</sup> Balchandra Jain, *Jaina Bronzes from Rajnapur Khinkhini*, Journal of Indian Museum, Vol. XI, 1955, pp. 15-20, Pl. I-V.



The Jina, being nude, apparently is Digambara, though its southern origin is doubtful, as in south India the Jinas are usually represented as seated in *ardha-padmasana*. The sharp flexing of the bodies of the attendant fly-whisk bearers is more in the Western Indian tradition than in the southern one.

The bronze is well-preserved though the faces are a little worn out. It can be safely assigned to the late 10th or early 11th century A.D.

## RECENTLY ACQUIRED METAL IMAGES IN THE PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM

Karl Khandalavala

(1) Female *Ghaori*-bearer (Figs. 54, 55, 56). Western Chālukya. Probably from the Karnātaka country. c. 10th century A.D. Colour-blackish brown. Ht. with pedestal 22.5 cm.; without pedestal 18.7 cm.

This is one of the finest Chālukya metal images which has yet come to light. It is not in the manner of the Eastern Chālukya school, where the female figures are apt to be more svelte and decorative like the well known group of Venugopāla and his consorts from Chimakurti in the Madras Museum<sup>1</sup> which, incidentally, cannot be later than the 12-13th century. Our image is also quite distinct from the Kākatīya school Dīpalakṣmī from Warangal<sup>2</sup> which can be ascribed to the 12th century. More recently several Chālukyan bronzes have been discovered at Bāptālā, Andhra Pradesh and are now in the Hyderabad Museum. They are being published in Lalit Kalā No. 13. The hoard contains female figures which though attractive are stylistically different from the *Ghaori*-bearer under consideration. Our figure, however, can be compared to the Jain Yakṣhī (2) in the collection of Captain Jones<sup>3</sup> and now acquired by the British Museum, which bears an inscription in Kanarese regarded as being in 10th century characters, which opinion accords with the style of the image. Stylistically both images belong to the same school. I do not know on what grounds Mysore was given as the provenance of the British Museum Yakṣhī in the *Art of India and Pakistan*, fig. 329. May be that was the area from which it was acquired though this factor would not count far much because there is reason to think that our image was acquired from the Karnātaka country. Both images have broad, full faces, very prominent rounded breasts and somewhat similar coiffure. Neither wears any necklaces or armlets, though our image has bangles and anklets. The facial type of the image can easily be seen in the Karnātaka country and the sculptor has evidently been influenced by a local type. I had once seen with Raja Kelkar of Poona a small seated image of Ambikā from the Gadag area bearing an inscription of the 11-12th century and having the same type of broad full face.

The iconography of our image poses a problem. It does not conform to the description of any of the Yakṣhīs of the Tīrthaṅkaras either according to the *Śvetāmbara* or the *Digambara* texts. Despite this fact it is still possible that it is meant to be a Yakṣhī, because iconography undergoes many changes

<sup>1</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Bronzes*, New Delhi, 1963 (Lalit Kalā Akademi Publication), Pl. 4a. The group is ascribed therein to the 10-11th cent. which seems to be somewhat too early. But the 16th century dating of some writers seems to be completely off the mark.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. 3a.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. 3b.



and numerous local variations of an image come into existence in every pantheon. Our figure may be connected in some way by a local tradition with the 19th Tīrthaṅkara Mallinātha whose symbol is a waterpot, as the figure is shown as an attendant with a *chaurī*, resting her left hand on piled up water-pots. Or she may be a figure in the manner of the female figures who are seen standing beside such piled up water-pots (*kalāṣa-sthāpana*) in Jain miniatures pertaining to the marriage of a Jina such as the illustration relating to Supārśvanātha's marriage.<sup>4</sup> We are assuming that the figure belongs to the Jain pantheon which is not unlikely but it may have some other connotation such as an association with the concept of Śrī. There is no indication that our image ever had a *prabhā* and in this respect it differs from the British Museum example, which may be a little later than our figure.

(2) Buddha in *bhūmisparīka-mudrā* (Figs. 59, 60). Probably of Western Tibetan provenance. c. 11th century A.D. Ht. 20.5 cm. Brassy coloured metal from which most of the original gold gilt has been removed. Silver inlay in the eyes. Hollow cast.

In its own category this image is as unique as the Chālukya Yakṣī described above. It is not Nepalese nor can it be ascribed to the so-called Kashmir school which was probably common to several regions of north India. So also it is quite different in style from the images of the Eastern Indian school many of which we know were taken to Nepal and Tibet. The slim body is markedly elongated from the waist upwards without any attempt at modelling the torso save for the slightly raised breasts. The neck is long and the flat broad face discloses no Chinese influence. The top of the head is flat. The combination of these characteristics give the image a certain resemblance to some of the figures to be seen in the frescoes at Tsparang. The treatment of the drapery is in keeping with the austerity of the image. The back has suffered damage as can be seen in Fig. 60. Western Tibet under the Guge kingdom appears to have developed a school of its own influenced by artists from Kashmir and also other parts of India. But as almost invariably happens with immigrant artists, they soon develop a style, which becomes characteristic of the region to which they have migrated and which is not merely a reflection of the traditions of their original homeland.

(3) Jambhala (Fig. 57). Nepal school. c. 15th century A.D. Copper gilt. Ht. with pedestal 12 cm.; without pedestal 9 cm.

A particularly fine example of Jambhala whose images are popular with the Nepalese metal sculptors. The dating of Nepalese metal images is a vexed question and there is a great paucity of material on which to base definite opinions. The present writer for want of adequate evidence has been unable to accept the very early dates ascribed to many Nepalese metal images. Dr. Stella Kramrisch in her recent catalogue—*The Art of Nepal* (Asia Society Inc.)—has ascribed some metal images to dates as early as the 7th to

<sup>4</sup> Sarabhai Nawab, *Jaina Chitra Kalpadruma* (2nd Part), Ahmedabad, 1958, Pl. 71, fig. 106.



the 9th century A.D. It would be wise I feel to keep note of all the dated metal images of the 15th to 17th centuries A.D. in various collections and then consider if there is any real basis for the very early ascriptions. Unfortunately, the dated material does not take us further back than the 15th century but even so it may afford a clue. Till there is more data available it seems to me that the dating of Nepalese metal images to dates earlier than the 14th century or thereabout is little more than guess work though I would not rule out the possibility of early images. Comparison with stone sculpture can be misleading. Even Nepalese wood sculpture of fairly later periods retained the features of early stone sculpture.

(4) *Kālaṃbha* (Fig. 58). Copper. Tibet. c. 15th century A.D. Colour-blackish brown. Ht. 9.5 cm.

It appears to be a provincial product. In the right hand he holds a citron and in the left *nakula* (mongoose) who is vomiting treasure. The horrific face is in keeping with the concept of *Kālaṃbha*.

(5) *Vishṇu* with consort surrounded by a *prabhā* (Fig. 61). Pāla school. Eastern Bengal. c. 10th century A.D. Green patination with traces of red lead. Ht. 19.8 cm.

It appears to be a provincial product and is different from the usual finished images of the Pāla school. Therein lies its charm.

(6) Tibetan deified king Sron-Tsan-Gampo (Fig. 62).<sup>1</sup> He was considered to be the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara. c. 16th century A.D. Copper gilt. Ht. 27 cm.

The king is dressed in a long robe with decorative hems and a jewelled belt and is wearing full boots. The head-dress consists of a tall chignon with a head at the apex which is intended to be Amitābha, because the king himself is regarded as an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara. The earrings are set with turquoise and side ornaments are set with corals. The long falling sleeves indicate that the king wears two inner robes underneath.

An image of this king is referred to in B. Winington's *Tibet*, but such representations are very rare. The present image is a unique example not only because of the rarity of the subject matter but also because of its artistic rendering. Most of the gold which is of a dull tint is intact.

(7) *Padmapāṇi* (Fig. 63). Copper. Nepal. c. 15th century A.D. or even considerably earlier. Ht. 16.7 cm.

Probably a provincial production. The lug at the base indicates it was an attendant figure of a Buddhist image. Necklaces and armlets indicate turquoise insets. Elongated Nepalese images of Bodhisattvas are not unknown but this type is quite unusual. The lug at the back indicates it originally had a short halo.

<sup>1</sup> L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, second edition, Cambridge, reprinted, 1939, p. 22.



## FIVE CHOĻA IMAGES IN THE COLLECTION OF THE PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM

B. V. Shetti

The sculpture section of the Prince of Wales Museum was enriched by the recent addition of five ChoĻa sculptures. Among these are Śrīdevī, Sadāśiva, Vṛishabhavāhana Śiva and two Dvārapālas. The image of Śrīdevī was presented to the Museum along with ten Bharhut sculptures by Mrs. Madhuri Desai in 1958. Sadāśiva and the two Dvārapāla images were presented in addition to other sculptures and bronzes by Lady Cowasji Jehangir in 1963 and the Vṛishabhavāhana Śiva was locally purchased in the year 1965.

All the above five sculptures belong to the late ChoĻa period (1070-1250 A.D.) and are carved out of granite rock. The ChoĻa sculptor very often carved out of hard rock like granite to show an intimate understanding of form, which after many experiments in the previous centuries gains in volume which is pleasing. Among the large number of images produced during the ChoĻa period the majority are Śaiva figures as the ChoĻas were staunch Śaivas, though Vaiṣṇava and Jaina images are not unknown.

### **Srīdevī**

Late ChoĻa. 11th cent. A.D. Ht. 73.4 cm.

This bust of Śrīdevī (Fig. 64) is broken at the waist. She holds a lotus flower in the left hand and the right hand is broken. She wears *karandamukuta*, necklaces and *patrakundalas*. Though Bhūdevī, the other consort of Viṣṇu, is also adorned with *karandamukuta* she wears only *makarakundalas*. Śrīdevī has the *kuchabandha* (breast-band) which is not worn by Bhūdevī.

### **Sadasiva**

Late ChoĻa. 11th cent. A.D. Ht. 132.5 cm.

Four armed Sadāśiva (Fig. 65) is seated in *lalitāsana* on a double lotus pedestal. The upper right hand holds the *śrīṣūla* and left the *akṣhamālā*. The lower right hand in *abhyamudrā* is broken and the left hand is resting on the lap. He wears a tall *jaṭāmukuta*, earrings, armbands, bracelets, necklaces, *yajñopavīta*, *udarabandha* and *pādasara*. His short *dhōṭī* is clinging to the thigh. The nose is slightly damaged.

The *Uttarakāmikāgama* states that Sadāśiva may be conceived as having only one face set with three eyes which represent the *icchāśakti*, *jñānaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*, with the *chandrakalā* (the crescent moon), which stands as a symbol

of *jñāna* (wisdom) tucked up in the *jaṭāmukha* and adorned with all ornaments. Our image conforms with the description of the single headed Sadāśiva.<sup>1</sup>

No form of Sadāśiva is mentioned by Hemādri who has dealt at length with other deities. But Sadāśiva is not totally unknown to Purāṇas. Sadāśiva occupies a prominent place in the Tāntrika *Nibhandas* and texts. The worship of Sadāśiva might have come into vogue in Bengal during the reign of the Pālas and Sēnas. The availability of the paintings representing Sadāśiva at Puri and Bhuvaneśvara and the mention of Sadāśiva by Śaṅkarāchārya and by Lakṣmaṇa Deśikā—both from south India show that the cult was very wide-spread.

### Vṛishabhavahana Siva

Late Chola. 11th cent. A.D. Ht. 96 cm.

The four-armed standing Vṛishabhavāhana Śiva (Fig. 66) holds in raised upper hands indistinct weapons, perhaps *paraśu* (battle-axe) in the right hand and the *mṛiga* (antelope) in the left. The lower right hand is akimbo and the lower left hand rests on the head of Nandi standing behind. Śiva wears *jaṭāmukha*, *karnakuṇḍalas*, necklaces and *yaṅhopavīta*. While he stands firm on his right leg his left leg is slightly bent. His head is a little inclined on the right.

When Śiva is made to stand leaning against the bull and is not mounting it, the *Kāśyapa-Śilpa* calls him Vṛishavāhana. If Śiva is seated on the bull then he is known as Vṛishārūḍha. In this case, the elbow of the right hand of Śiva rests on the head of the bull.<sup>2</sup> But in the case of our image the lower left hand rests on the head of the Nandi.

Gopinath Rao observes, "The Vṛishavāhanamūrti should be standing with the right leg placed firmly on the ground and the left slightly bent; the left arm should be slightly bent at its wrist resting on the head of the bull. In the back right hand there must be the *taṅka* or *paraśu* and in the back left hand *mṛiga*."<sup>3</sup>

Our image conforms with Gopinath Rao's above specifications.

### Dvarapala

Late Chola. 12th cent. A.D. Ht. 160 cm.

Four-armed standing Dvārapāla (Fig. 67); the right leg is raised a little and resting on a raised pedestal which carries the figure of a snake. The left hand is resting on a support. He has a terrible face with goggle eyes and protruding tusks. The *jaṭābhāra* is resting on the shoulders. He wears a tall *jaṭāmukha* with *kirtimukha* ornaments, circular earrings decorated with a bird in

<sup>1</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Part II, Madras, 1916, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> H. K. Sastri, *South-Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses*, Madras, 1916, pp. 113-114.

<sup>3</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II Part I, Madras, 1916, p. 355.



each, necklaces, *yajñopavīta* made of flowers, *uḍarabandha*, lion-mask armlets and bracelets. In spite of the third eye and tusks an air of serenity and gentleness unusual in a *krodha* or terrible figure permeates the face.

### **Dvārapāla**

Late Choḷa. 12th cent. A.D. Ht. 160 cm.

The left leg of the Dvārapāla (Fig. 68) is raised a little and resting on a raised pedestal. The left hand holds the mace. He wears a *kaṇṇḍamukūṭa*. In all other respects this Dvārapāla is similar as the above Dvārapāla.

In ancient times, perhaps it was the rule to keep the effigies of the conquered rulers to serve as Dvārapālas in the palaces and temples as suggested by certain early epigraphic evidences. But later on conventional figures of semi-divine beings were employed, at first with two arms, then with four, in that capacity. The symbols held in the hands of the Dvārapālas differ with the cult images in the shrine. Dvārapālikās (female door-keepers) were kept especially in front of shrines of the goddesses.<sup>4</sup> The Dvārapālas of Śaivite shrines often rest on clubs whereas the Dvārapālas of Vaiṣṇavite shrines are without clubs. Some times out of the two Dvārapālas one is male and the other female.

The Dvārapālas seen at the entrance of almost every Hindu temple are also demi-gods and being sometimes called Chaṇḍa and Prachāṇḍa, sometimes Jaya and Vijaya or Harabhadra and Subhadra in accordance with the place they occupy in the second, third or fifth door-way leading to the main shrine.<sup>5</sup> The *Śilpaśāstragraha* states that in form the Dvārapālakas are like ghosts with two big hands in one of which they hold a club. The Śaivite Dvārapālas though elegant in form have ugly mien and have protruding canine teeth which are absent in their Vaiṣṇavite counterparts.

<sup>4</sup> K. A. N. Sastri, *The Colas*, Madras, 1955, p. 734.

<sup>5</sup> H. K. Sastri, *loc. cit.*, p. 251.

## A DATED MANUSCRIPT OF THE *KĀLAKĀCHĀRYA KATHĀ* IN THE PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM

S. V. Gorakshkar

In 1958 Prince of Wales Museum acquired through purchase an illustrated paper manuscript of the *Kālakāchārya Kathā* written on paper and dated in V.S. 1423 = A.D. 1366.

The manuscript ran into 72 folios of which only 68 are now available. Fortunately the first and the last folios are intact.

Each folio measures approximately 33.5 × 8.7 cm. On each side of the folio is a margin of 3.2 cm. delineated by a thick red line. In the blank square space of about 2.5 cm. in the centre appears a solid red circle with a perforation apparently intended for stringing the folios. In the margins on either side are two plain red circles in line with the central circle perhaps intended to balance the composition. There are 7 lines in each folio and the illustrations, three in number (Figs. 69, 70, 71), appear on the right side.

The importance of the manuscript, however, lies in the following colophon :

*Samvat 1423 varshe āśvin sudi 1 pratipadi tithau vāre śanau śrīmad Yoginipuravate abhiliḥhito.*

It is, therefore, clear that the manuscript was written at Yoginipura i.e. modern Delhi in Samvat 1423 = A.D. 1366. Delhi was then ruled over by Firuz Shah Tughluq. Unfortunately the colophon does not mention anything about the scribe or the donor but, the fact naming the provenance is of no less importance. It shows that Yoginipura was also an important centre of the so called Western Indian style.

In the case of our miniatures, apart from the fact that they are dated, an evidence which in itself is convincing, the following features of the figure drawing serve as corroborative evidence.

1. The folios are long and narrow with seven lines to each folio with plain red dots in the margin instead of lozenges of the later period.
2. All the three illustrations show figures in full view.
3. The figures have broad shoulders, narrow waist and show a formal and balanced modelling of the body.
4. The features are delineated with broad strokes. The forehead with a *tilaka* mark is narrow.
5. The ornaments and textile designs are suggestive.



6. The architecture is very simple without any kind of elaboration of details.
7. The colour scheme is restricted to brick red, yellow, green and faint blue; restrained use of gold is made to highlight the ornaments.

In another manuscript of the *Kalpasūtra* and *Kālakāchārya Kathā* in this Museum's collection<sup>1</sup> we come across a very sensitive style acclaimed to be the best of the period. It is now accepted that this manuscript belongs to the third quarter of the fourteenth century. The illustrations in our *Kālakāchārya Kathā*, which are almost contemporary, indicate a style that is more archaic in character.

### Description of the Illustrations :

Fol. 1. Mahāvīra in Pushpottara Heaven (Fig. 69). 6.5 × 8.7 cm.

He is seated in *pariyāṅkāśana* with his hands in *dhyānamudrā* on throne supported by lions and elephants. On either side stand a fly whisk bearer; in the upper panel appear Gandharvas and on the top of the parasol stand elephants with raised trunks apparently sprinkling water. Brick red background; yellow body colour.

Fol. 39. Obverse: *Samavasāra* of Pāravanātha (Fig. 70). 8.2 × 8.7 cm.

The dark bodied Jina is seated in *pariyāṅkāśana*; yellow and red background; four conventional animals at four corners.

Folio unnumbered : Sarasvatī (Fig. 71). 6.5 × 8.7 cm.

The four handed Sarasvatī holding *vinā*, rosary, *pustaka*, and *kalasa* is seated on a blue throne in *pariyāṅkāśana*. She wears a green dotted bodice, yellow *sari* with check design, crown, and ornaments. Red background and dark sky. This figure is comparable to the figure of Lakshmi appearing on the cover of the palm leaf manuscript of *Dharmopadesamālā* dated A.D. 1368.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Moti Chandra, "An illustrated manuscript of the *Kalpasūtra* and *Kālakāchārya Kathā*", Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum, No. 4, 1953-54, pp. 40-48.

<sup>2</sup> W. Norman Brown, "Stylistic varieties of early western Indian miniature painting about 1400 A.D." J.I.S.Q.A. Vol-V, p.4, fig. 3.







1. Śiva Paśupati. Steatite seal, Mohenjodâro, 2300 B.C. - 1750 B.C.



2. A tree spirit with votaries. Steatite seal, Mohenjodâro, 2300 B.C.-1750 B.C.



4. Wrestling between a horned female figure and a horned beast. Steatite seal, Mohenjodâro, 2300 B.C. - 1750 B.C.



3. Horned masks and a horned goddess. Terracotta, Mohenjodâro, 2300 B.C.-1750 B.C.



5. Designs on pots from Cemetery H. Terracotta, Harappa, 2300 B.C.-1750 B.C.



6. An elephant spouting lotus rhizome. Bhārhut, Śuṅga, 2nd century B.C.





7. Two stags running in opposite directions. Bhārhut. Śūṅga. 2nd century B.C.



8. A makara with two horns. Bhārhut. Śūṅga. 2nd century B.C.

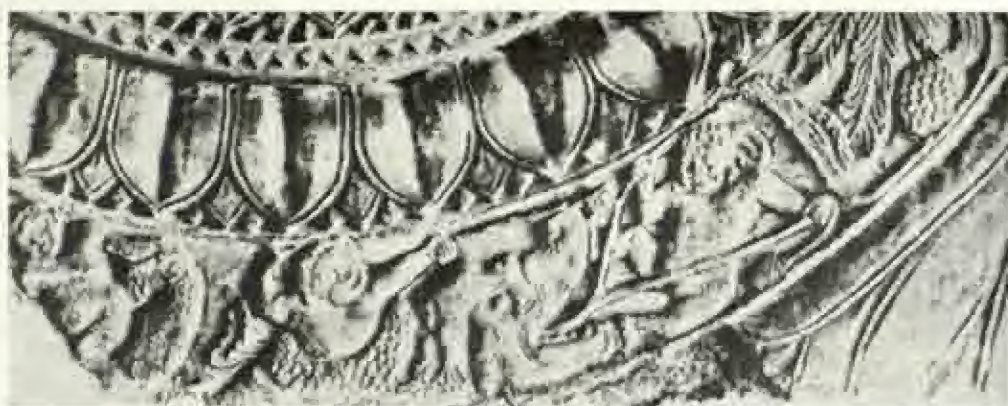


9. An elephant blowing a lotus rhizome. Stūpa 2, Sāñchl. 1st century B.C.





10. A makara spouting a garland. Marble. Amarāvati. 2nd century A.D. Government Museum, Madras.



11. A Yaksha pulling out some object from the mouth of a makara. Marble. Amarāvati. 2nd century A.D. Government Museum, Madras.



12. A makara spouting a lotus scroll. Marble. Amarāvati. 2nd century A.D. Govt. Museum, Madras.





13. Triratna motif, Marble, Nāgārjunakonda, 3rd century A.D.



14. Jewelled necklaces hanging from elephant tusks. East pillar of Northern Gateway, Stūpa No. 1, Sāñchi, 1st century B.C.



15. Triratna motif on east pillar of Eastern Gateway, Stūpa No. 1, Sāñchi, 1st century B.C.



16. Two tusks with a fish in the centre. Kankālī Tilā, Mathurā. Kushāna, 2nd century A.D.



17. Śrīdevī. Clay plaque. Avara, Madhya Pradesh, 100 B.C. - 300 A.D.



18. Decorative medallion with elephant tusks. Stūpa 2, Sāñchlī. 1st century B.C.



19. Fragmentary bone figure, probably representing Śrī. Chaurasi mound, Mathurā. 1st century B.C. Mathurā Museum.





20. Nūdhāpīngā (Carniozopia). Bronze, Posheri, Wada Taluka, Thana District. Ht. 40.7 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



21. Another view of Fig. 20.



22. Another view of Fig. 20.



23. Detail of Fig. 20.



24. Māyā's dream. Marble, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, 3rd century A.D.





25. Goddess Śrī. Ivory. Pompeii. Second half of the 1st century B.C.



26. A courtesan alluring Rishyaśringa. Mathurā. Kushāṇa. 2nd century A.D. Mathurā Museum.



27. Horned head. Terracotta. Kauśāmbī. 2nd century A.D. Ht. 12 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



28. Kubera and his consort, Takht-i-Bahī. Gandhāra, 2nd cent. A.D.



29. Mithuna couple with attendants and two horns. Durgā temple, Aihole. 7th century A.D.



30. Ascetic and his companion with a cornucopia. From the relief of Arjuna's penance at Mahābalipuram, Pallava, 7th century A.D.





31. Kubera/Vaishrava with attendants.  
Fun-huang, Tibet, 10th century A.D.



32. Jambhala. Nepal, 1789 A.D. Prince of Wales  
Museum, Bombay.



33. Ganesa, Vadaval, North Gujarat, Early mid 9th cent. A.D.  
Museology Department, M. S. University, Baroda.



34. Upper register: Birth of Mahāvīra,  
Lower register: His illustration on Mount Meru.  
Folio from the *Kalpasūtra* painted at Jaunpur,  
Western Indian or Gujarati School.  
Dated 1465 A.D. Narasimhjiñā Pohnā  
Jhāna Bhagdār, Baroda.





35. Sridhara, Jondhali Bang, Thana District, Silahara, 1000-1200 A.D., Ht. 125 cm, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



36. Mahishasuramardini, Jondhali Bang, Thana District, Silahara, 1000-1200 A.D., Ht. 58 cm, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.





37. Ganeśa, Jondhali Baug, Thana District, Silahara, 1000-1200 A.D, Ht. 54.3 cm, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



38. Keshava, Bichi, Ratnagiri District, Silahara, 1000-1200 A.D, Ht. 137 cm.





39. Kārtikeya, Vindhyaśālini Cave, Chiplun, Silāhara.  
1000-1200 A.D. Ht. 71 cm.



40. Detail of Fig. 39.



41. Mahishāsuramārcinī. Vindhyaeswari Cave, Cliphun, Śilāhāra, 1000-1200 A.D. Ht. 46 cm.



42. Dancing Śiva, Alibag, Kolaba District, Śilāhāra, 1000-1200 A.D. 71 x 76 cm. Rājā Kelkar Museum, Poona.





43. Dancing Balakrishna, South India, Chola, 12-13th century A.D. Ht. with pedestal 60.5 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



44. Reverse of Fig. 43.



45. Detail of Fig. 43.



46. Reverse of Fig. 45.





47- Nartana Sambandar. Sri Pongayittanadesvarar temple, Sittayemeir, Tirutaraipundi Taluq. 11th century A.D.



48. Nartana Sambandar, Sri Kāśi Anantavarar temple, Alangudi, Pāpanāśam Taluq. 11th century A.D.



49. Tiruññāna Sāmbandar, South India, 14th cent. A.D. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

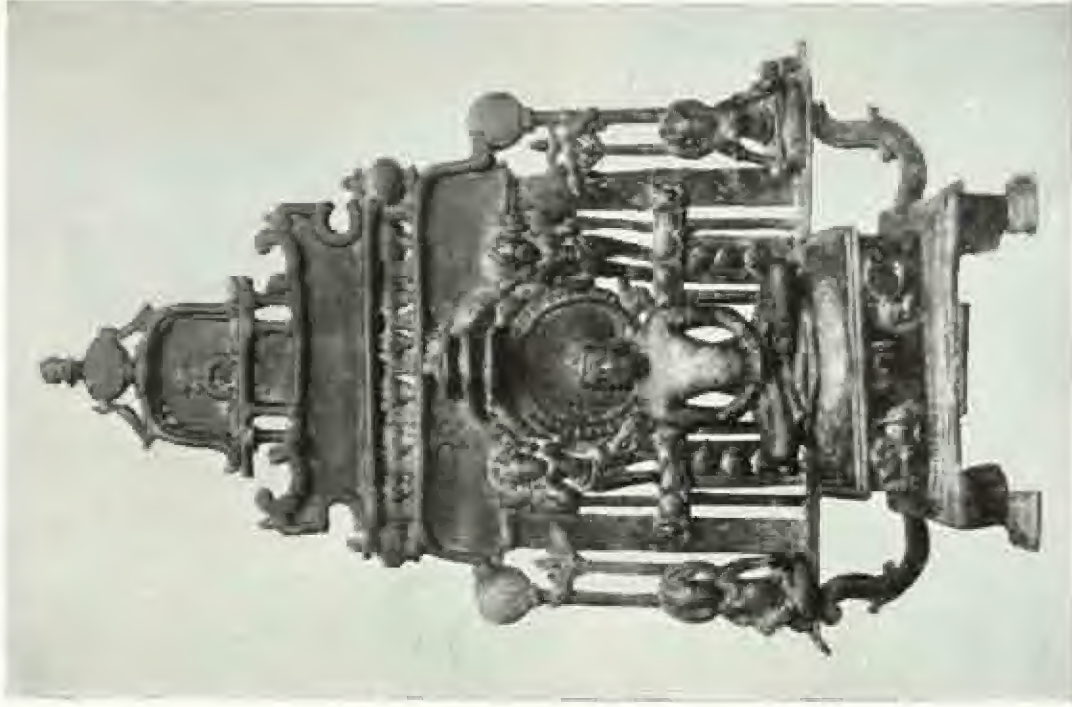


50. Mahāvīra. Probably from Karnataka. Late 9th century A.D. Ht. 34.3 × W. 22.9 cm. Haridas Swali's Collection.



51. Inscription on the reverse of Fig. 50.





52. Jina, South India, Early Chola, 10th cent. A.D.  
Government Museum, Madras.



53. Rishabhasthala, North India, Late 10th or early  
11th century A.D., Ht. 50 x W. 30 cm.  
Haridas Swali's Collection.



54. Female *chauri*-bearer. Western Chālukya.  
Probably from Karnataka, c. 10th century A.D.  
Ht. with pedestal 22.5 cm.  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

55. Another view of Fig. 54.







56. Detail of Fig. 54.



57. Jambhala. Gift bronze, Nepal, c. 16th century A.D. Ht. with pedestal 12 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



58. Kāṣajambhala. Copper, Tibet, c. 15th cent. A.D. Ht. 9.5 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

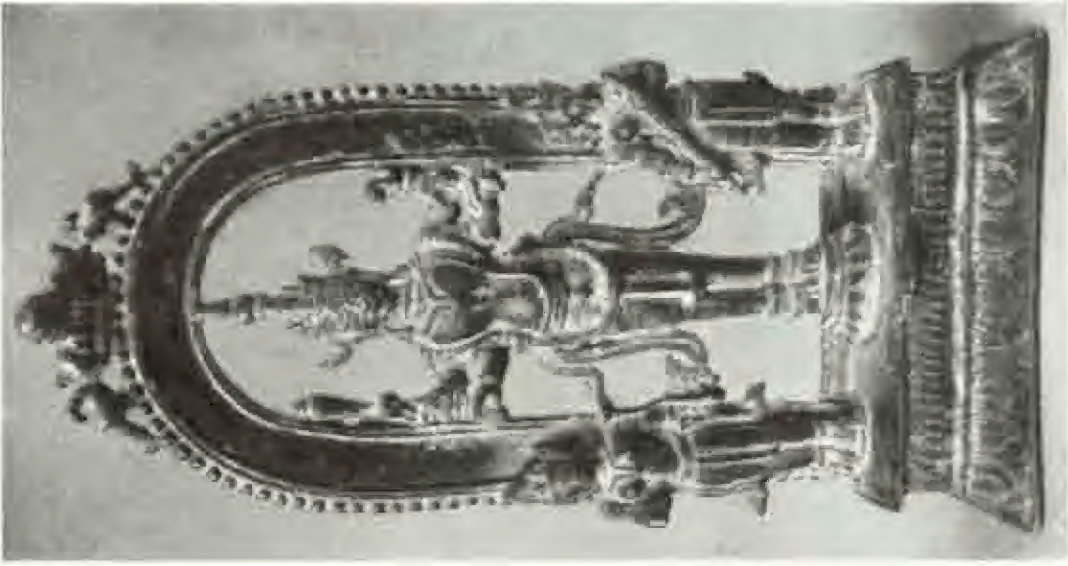


59. Buddha. Probably from Western Tibet, c. 11th century A.D.  
Ht. 20.5 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



60. Reverse of Fig. 59.





**61.** Vishnu, Bronze, Pala. Eastern Bengal, 10th cent., A.D. Ht. 19.8 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**62.** Sron-Tsan-Gampo, Gilt bronze, Tibet, c. 16th century A.D. Ht. 27 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**63.** Padmapāni, Copper, Nepal, c. 13th century A.D. or earlier. Ht. 16.7 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**64.** Sri Devi, South India, Late Chola, 11th century A.D.  
Ht. 73.4 cm, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**65.** Siddhivinayaka, South India, Late Chola, 11th century A.D.  
Ht. 132.5 cm, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.





**66.** Vishubhavanātha Siva. South India.  
Late Chola. 14th century A.D. Ht. 106 cms.  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**67.** Dērapāla. South India. Late Chola.  
12th century A.D. Ht. 160 cms.  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



**68.** Dērapāla. South India. Late Chola.  
14th century A.D. Ht. 160 cms.  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



69. Mahāvīra in Pushpottara Heaven. *Kālakāchārya Kāthā* Ms. Dt. 1366 A.D. 6.5 x 8.7 cm. Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



70. Sāmāyasarapa of Pārśvanātha. From the same Ms. as Fig. 69. 8.2 x 8.7 cm.



71. Saraswati. From the same Ms. as Fig. 69. 6.5 x 8.7 cm.









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